



CLOSE THE GAP ANNUAL REPORT 2012



CHAIRMAN'S FOREWORD

Referring to the proverb 'hope springs eternal' I expected and hoped last year to start my foreword for this year's annual report with a more positive outlook on the situation in Europe. Unfortunately, this is not the case. For the fourth consecutive year the European Union is suffering under the financial and economic crisis that started with the bank crash in 2008 in the United States and that spread like a snowball over the rest of the world, not least in Europe.

Notwithstanding the fact that the financial and economic situation in Europe is still critical, the development of Close the Gap in 2012 has fortunately again been above expectation. In fact, compared to the state of the Belgian and Dutch economies in general, Close the Gap is doing relatively well. This is mainly due to two reasons. First of all, the social entrepreneurial concept of Close the Gap is solid and creates trust and confidence in our donors and strategic partners. Secondly, I am becoming more and more convinced that this success is also due to the fact that Close the Gap stands for sustainability. Our organisation offers a long-term sustainable solution for the reuse of depreciated high-quality computers in developing countries. The summary of the activities of Close the Gap's daughter organisation WorldLoop, given in Chapter 4, clearly demonstrate that sustainability is part of our DNA.

Close the Gap not only pays due attention to the sustainability of the projects it supports in developing countries, but also takes care of the electronic waste produced when the computers that are shipped to developing countries finally reach their technical end of life. To prevent these computers being dumped as e-waste in landfills, Close the Gap has created a new organisation, WorldPC (rebranded as WorldLoop since September 2012), and started a pilot project in Nairobi, where the end-of-life IT assets are recycled in an environmentally friendly manner. The result is a substantial extension of our sustainability concept.

At the end of 2012 total assets respective liabilities reached €5.53 million, which is €40,000 less than in the previous year. This is explained by the fact that Close the Gap has used some of the advanced payments from its funders and donors for project development in East Africa. At the end of the fiscal year we noted a positive result of €234,089.

Since its creation in 2003 more than 280,000 computer assets (of which 60,000 in 2012) were donated to Close the Gap and no less than 86,000 assets were given a sustainable second life in a developing or emerging country (15,500 in 26 developing countries in 2012). In 2012 Close the Gap received computers from 96 donor companies. Over the years more than 2,500 projects in 40 developing countries have been realised. At present Close the Gap is supported by almost 30 strategic partnerships that make computers available as well as provide financial support and in-kind support through their core business. In developing countries, Close the Gap works closely with 14 service partners. The services rendered by these partners can comprise inland transport, importation, technical and pedagogical training, maintenance and helpdesk services, refurbishing and recycling of e-waste.

In previous annual reports a chapter on WorldPC was included. For the first time WorldPC (now WorldLoop) will publish its own annual report on its activities in 2012. However, a summary of the key information for Close the Gap's stakeholders is provided in this annual report in Chapter 4.

Finally, as chairman of Close the Gap I would like to express words of thanks and appreciation to all our sponsors and strategic partners for their continued support, to the members of the Board of Close the Gap for their active involvement in the governance of our organisation and also to the members of our staff who run the day-to-day activities of Close the Gap in such a committed and professional manner.

—
Prof. em. Dr. Wim A.G. Blonk



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WHAT WE DO



DTHF Youth Centre, Masiphuleme, South Africa

BRIDGING THE DIGITAL DIVIDE

Close the Gap is an international non-profit organisation that aims to bridge the digital divide by offering high-quality, preowned computers donated by large and medium-sized corporations or public organisations to educational, medical, entrepreneurial and social projects in developing and emerging countries. All the projects are demand-driven and share the common denominator of being non-profit-oriented initiatives.

Access to information and communication technology (ICT) is essential in the developing world because it is key to improving a country's educational and economic prospects. However, the cost of new equipment, limited infrastructure and the lack of IT knowledge and proficiency mean that many people still have no access to IT. Today, information is seen as one of the major drivers of economic and social development and ICT makes access to information available on an unprecedented scale. From education to healthcare, entrepreneurship, environment, gender and good governance – all these require access to relevant information, and that's what Close the Gap is all about.

The digital divide is not only a divide between people who have access to ICT and people who don't. It's also a divide between people who have knowledge of ICT and those who don't, between people who realise the opportunities presented by ICT and those who don't. It consists of an infrastructure gap, a knowledge gap and a psychological gap.

Close the Gap creates a win-win situation by supplying projects in developing countries with high-quality refurbished IT equipment that is donated by companies and public organisations in Western countries. Not only does Close the Gap offer an alternative to just recycling and life cycle extension, but it also provides a full service for companies and institutions wishing to reuse their computer equipment in a socially and environmentally responsible way. Close the Gap offers highly professional 'asset recovery services' to those partners, ensuring a state-of-the-art logistical refurbishing process that includes a comprehensive data-erasure process.


Since 2003, Close the Gap has already received more than 280,000 computers from companies and other institutions all over Europe. Since 2012, American and Asian companies have joined the programme as well. After the collection, Close the Gap arranges for the hard disks to be cleaned and fully erased via a unique patented overwriting process¹ and the hardware to be checked and configured according to the requirements of its end-users. The computers are then shipped to their new destinations. Close the Gap adopts a comprehensive approach by working through local service partners that take care of the installation and the maintenance of computers, offer IT training on-site and ensure the end-of-life management of the IT assets. When the computers reach the end of their lives, Close the Gap's partners in Eastern Africa take care of the collection, dismantling and sustainable treatment of the electronic waste (e-waste). By using reverse logistics, the components that cannot be treated in Sub-Saharan Africa are sent to European high-tech end-recyclers. The aim is to extend this system to other regions in developing countries where Close the Gap is active.


Today, Close the Gap has supported more than 2,500 projects all over the world. However diverse the projects, they all have one common denominator: a focus on advancing both the individual and the community within a spirit of socio-economical education. By following this principle, Close the Gap is participating in the United Nations Millennium Development Goals.

THE GREEN PERSPECTIVE

Reduce, Reuse and Recycle:

By making high-quality and professional refurbished IT equipment available at cost-efficient prices, Close the Gap lengthens the lifespan of e-equipment. A longer lifespan means **reuse**; reuse means less production of new consumption goods, which means that people can **reduce** their use of scarce resources and produce less waste. Through WorldLoop², local partners in Africa can **recycle** computers once they reach the end of their second life. Some components cannot be treated locally, so they are returned to European high-tech end-recyclers through reverse logistics.

 In Africa, local service partners ensure a support and maintenance programme that guarantees the **long-term usability of the computers**.

 An **equal partnership** with all stakeholders is a key value of Close the Gap. Furthermore, Close the Gap always works on the basis of a **supply-demand** equilibrium with its partners in the South.

¹ Using Blancco.

² WorldLoop, a brand name of WorldPC vzw/asbl, is a spin-off organisation created by Close the Gap Int. vzw in 2009 to take care of e-waste from end-of-life hardware in developing countries.



ICT4DEVELOPMENT

Information and Communication Technology (ICT) is seen as an enabler for economic and social change in less developed countries and is even believed to be a catalyst that could help countries to leapfrog the industrial revolution phase of development, giving less developed countries the opportunity to catch up quickly with the Western world. Information and Communications Technology for Development (ICT4Dev) is about overcoming this digital divide and creating new opportunities and possibilities for people living in less developed countries.

Today, Millennium Development Goals (MDG) are widely used as a framework to structure development activities. Close the Gap offers tools that are helping the world to achieve the eight MDG, which range from halving extreme poverty to halting the spread of HIV/AIDS and providing universal primary education, all by the target date of 2015. By delivering ICT to projects in the South, Close the Gap helps non-profit organisations and other budget-limited entities in developing countries to achieve their objectives directly or indirectly.





HOW CLOSE THE GAP HELPS TO TACKLE THE MILLENNIUM DEVELOPMENT GOALS:

1. Eradicate extreme poverty and hunger:

Access to ICT and ICT training can enable target groups to increase their access to work and income.

2. Achieve universal primary education:

Implementing ICT in education can have a big impact on how children are taught, the amount of information that becomes available to teachers and students, and the quality of the education.

3. Improve maternal health:

Reduce child mortality, improve maternal health, combat HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases. ICT helps by improving health administration, collecting and storing health-related data on an individual basis to improve health services, creating awareness and distributing information on important health issues.



Women learn about health at the Medical Knowledge Institute, South Africa



International Centre for Reproductive Health, Mombasa, Kenya

4. Promote gender equality and empower women:

A lot of ICT4Dev projects focus specifically on improving the livelihood of women by enhancing their skills and creating new opportunities for their professional activities.

5. Develop a global partnership for development:

This development goal states that in cooperation with the private sector, the benefits of new technologies – especially ICT – should be made available to all.

“ICT and the new technological developments offer boundless opportunities in a worldwide network. Being able to use ICT opens a whole new world to you, on a professional as well as a private level.”

—
Ms. Neelie Kroes

European Commissioner for Digital Agenda
and Vice-President of the European Commission

“The great thing about ICT is that it brings more interaction between students worldwide. It’s a fantastic tool that makes it possible to share and receive new knowledge.”

—
Mr. Dan Mesis

Deputy Secretary of the Ministry of Environment
and Mineral Resources, Kenya

“Kenya, like several other developing countries, is confronted with an immense digital divide – there is a huge information gap between people who do have access to information provided through the adoption and use of Information Communication Technology and those who don’t. And of course, just like in the industrialised countries, computers are needed in every sector of society to manage output and improve results. Kenya has embraced ICT and its uptake in the last decade has been very commendable. We recognise that our current students at various levels in our educational institutions are the employees of the future! The great thing about ICT is that it brings more interaction between students worldwide. It’s a fantastic tool that makes it possible to share and receive new knowledge. Kenya appreciates partnerships that will add to greater adoption of Information Technology.”



CLOSE THE GAP'S MILESTONES

Start-up of Close the Gap as a student "mini-enterprise" idea at the Vrije Universiteit Brussel (VUB)



Mobile computer class

Official start-up, as a legal entity of the non-profit organisation Close the Gap Int. vzw

2001

2003

"Projects such as Close the Gap not only support economic and intellectual development in the South, but they also set a good example of turning e-waste into sustainable economic resources."

Prof. Dr. Paul De Knop
Rector Vrije Universiteit Brussel (VUB)

"The Vrije Universiteit Brussel is proud to be a partner of Close the Gap. As an internationally oriented university in Brussels, every day we experience the importance of ICT in ensuring high-quality education and research. That is why we see it as our social responsibility to support initiatives that help to bridge the fast growing digital divide between Western and developing countries. Projects such as Close the Gap not only support economic and intellectual development in the South, but they also set a good example of turning e-waste into sustainable economic resources."

European Commissioner Vice-President Neelie Kroes inaugurates Close the Gap's first e-waste centre in Nairobi (Kenya).



EU Commissioner Ms. Neelie Kroes inaugurates the Recycling Centre, Nairobi, Kenya

2010

Close the Gap is recognised as an official NGO by the United Nations (UNDPI).

2009

New model of local service partners.



School in Uganda

2012

Close the Gap celebrates the donation of its 250,000th computer asset in the Netherlands in the presence of Archbishop em. Desmond Tutu.



Archbishop em. Desmond Tutu in Culemborg, Netherlands



Royal mission in South Africa

Belgian Crown Prince Philippe and Princess Mathilde visit one of Close the Gap's projects supported in Cape Town (South Africa) with Archbishop em. Desmond Tutu.

2006

Close the Gap celebrates its 30,000th computer in the presence of Archbishop em. Desmond Tutu.



From left to right: Mr. Olivier Vanden Eynde (Managing Director, Close the Gap), Archbishop em. Desmond Tutu, Mr. Roger Dassen (Global Managing Director, Deloitte)

2007

Close the Gap celebrates its 50,000th computer in the presence of Archbishop em. Desmond Tutu.



Archbishop em. Desmond Tutu refurbishes the 50,000th computer for Close the Gap

Close the Gap becomes a founding member of the spin-off WorldPC vzw/asbl.



Crown Prince Philippe inaugurates PC Solidarity

Launch of PC Solidarity in Belgium in the presence of Belgian Crown Prince Philippe.



WorldPC becomes WorldLoop, as the pilot project successfully evolves into an operational organisation.



STRUCTURE AND ORGANISATION

Organisational and legal structure

Close the Gap Int. vzw/asbl³

Registration number: 860353772

VAT Belgium: BE 0860 353 772

VAT The Netherlands: NL 8153.23.062.B01

Registered headquarters and postal address

c/o Vrije Universiteit Brussel

Pleinlaan 2, 1050 Brussels, Belgium

Office & visitor address

Karel Van Miert Building

Pleinlaan 5, 1050 Brussels, Belgium



Ms. Sandy Lepage,
Mr. Peter Manderick,
Ms. Dunia Oumazza,
Mr. Olivier Vanden Eynde,
Ms. Barbara Toorens (WorldLoop),
Ms. Joëlle Verriest,
Ms. Sophie Colmant,
Mr. Thomas Poelmans (WorldLoop)
and Ms. Aurélie Dupont.

³ asbl = Association Sans But Lucratif; vzw = Vereniging Zonder Winstoogmerk



CLOSE THE GAP TEAM

Mr. Olivier Vanden Eynde⁴

Founder and Managing Director

“Close the Gap has been an adventure since the very beginning, with all our partners, supporters and friends helping to shape this adventure into a sustainable journey and constantly striving to excel in their efforts. Our team’s dedication and the fruitful collaboration with our service partners is transforming lives by giving people access to ICT.”

Ms. Dunia Oumazza

Operations Director (replaces Ms. Aurélie Dupont in 2013)

“For me, joining Close the Gap represented fresh air: Autonomy for beneficiaries’ Innovative projects and Responsibility!”

Mr. Peter Manderick

Head of Projects

“Being able, from a very young age, to build up ICT skills that are widely required today and as a consequence enjoy the benefits of ICT in all aspects of today’s society, I started working at Close the Gap driven by the motivation to share opportunities with people in less advantaged communities. After more than six years of developing projects with local partners, I still feel that our contributions are always highly appreciated by our partners and create a lasting impact on the lives of the millions that we’ve reached so far.”

Mrs. Sophie Colmant

Project Manager

“I was looking for a new challenge involving international settings, a multi-cultural environment and an innovative approach.”

Ms. Joëlle Verriest

PR and Communication Officer

“It’s amazing to experience our partners’ increasing involvement in corporate social responsibility despite the difficulties they might encounter economically. Their eagerness to engage in our project and to involve their employees demonstrate they really care about people and the planet!”

Ms. Sandy Lepage

Management Assistant (replaces Mrs. Danuta Sarna in 2013)

“Close the Gap is an organisation with a heart for humanity! I am happy that I can develop and grow by organising my work on an independent basis.”

⁴ Via a management contract, representing OKMGM bvba

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Close the Gap is governed by an independent Board of Directors and its primary function is to give advice and make recommendations to the Managing Director.

Mrs. Alessandra Azcarraga Sepul

Member of the technical committee at Close the Gap, Mrs. Alessandra Azcarraga Sepul assists the management of Close the Gap in developing environment-friendly technology and challenging Close the Gap's solutions in terms of green ICT hardware and software solutions for developing countries. Mrs Alessandra Azcarraga Sepul is also a founder of Avalon Studios and Avalon Network.

Prof. Em. Dr. Wim A. G. Blonk, *President*

Prof. Blonk was actively involved in the creation of Close the Gap and WorldLoop and has been the Chairman of the Board of Directors at Close the Gap since 2002. He retired in 1999 from the EU Commission as Honorary Director General and in 2004 he retired as Professor at the Vrije Universiteit Brussel. Prof. Blonk is personally involved in projects for disabled children in Tanzania, Malawi and North India (Ladakh).

Mr. André Bontems

Television Systems Engineer and a member of the technical committee at Close the Gap, Mr. Bontems helps develop new technologies that consume less energy and are an alternative source of power within ICT4Development. He is also a founder of Avalon Studios and Avalon Network.

Mr. Michel De Brauer

President and CEO of the Pietercil Group N.V., an international sales and marketing company located in Belgium, Mr. De Brauer is a member of the audit & budget committee at Close the Gap. On top of being a board member of several non-profit organisations in Belgium, Mr. De Brauer has been elected President of the European Sales and Marketing Association (ESMA). He is also a founding member of the Flemish Business Club 'De Warande' in Belgium. Mr. De Brauer is currently a member of the Board of Teisseire fruit syrup company (based in France, as a part of Britvic International Plc).

Mr. Olivier Vanden Eynde⁵

Mr. Vanden Eynde founded Close the Gap in September 2003 at the Solvay Business

School, as a mini-enterprise and spin-off of the Vrije Universiteit Brussel. Since the start, Mr. Vanden Eynde has been the Managing Director of Close the Gap. He is also the founder and Managing Director of WorldLoop⁶, the sister organisation that focuses on sound e-waste solutions in developing countries. Since 2006, Olivier has combined his job with a part-time position as a director at Deloitte Belgium.

Mr. Guido Vandervorst

Managing partner of the Enterprise Risk Services division and Innovation within Deloitte Belgium, Mr. Vandervorst focuses on internal audit and control services, CFO services, forensic services and ICT. Mr. Vandervorst is a member of the audit & budget committee at Close the Gap.

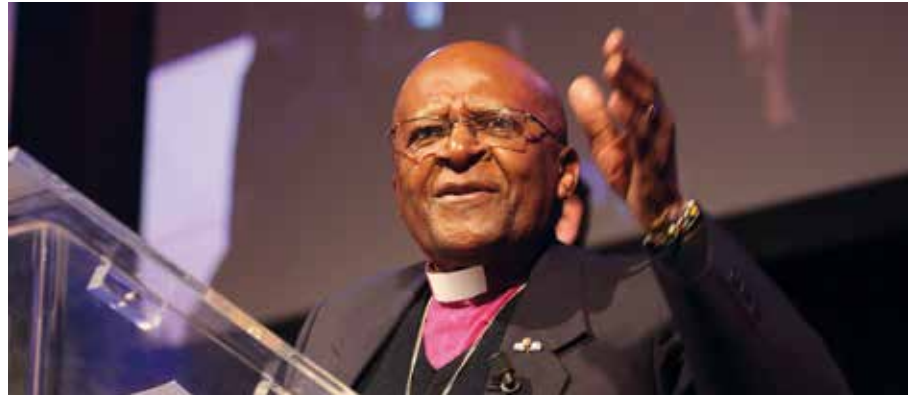
“Close the Gap provides a gateway to knowledge and opportunity for young people in the developing world. We wish to give constant encouragement to this tremendous work through a worldwide federated organisation based on our values, experiences and strengths.”

—
Michel De Brauer
 President and CEO of the Pietercil Group N.V.
 and Member of Close the Gap Board of Directors

⁵ Via a management contract, representing OKMGM bvba.
⁶ WorldLoop is the brand name of WorldPC vzw.

BOARD OF RECOMMENDATION

Close the Gap's Board of Recommendation consists of eminent people willing to vouch for and recommend Close the Gap within their networks.



Archbishop em. Desmond Tutu

Viscount Etienne Davignon

*Former Vice-President of the EU Commission;
President CSR Europe*

Prof. Dr. Marc Despontin

Professor at the Vrije Universiteit Brussel

Mr. François-Xavier de Donnea

*Member of the Belgian Chamber of
People's Representatives;
Minister of State, Belgium;
Professor Emeritus of the University of
Louvain (Louvain-la-Neuve, Belgium).*

Mr. Dieter Frisch

*Former Director General for Development
at the EU Commission*

Mrs. M. F. Heijn Everwijn Lange

*Ambassador De Grote Onderneming;
Ambassador STOP AIDS NOW!*

Mrs. Corinne Lepage

*Member of European Parliament;
Former Minister of Environment, France;
Partner at law firm Cabinet Huglo
Lepage Associés*

Prof. em. Dr. Silvain Loccufier

Honorary Rector of Vrije Universiteit Brussel

Baron Dr. Peter Piot

*Former Under-Secretary-General
of the United Nations;
Former Executive Director UNAIDS;
Director of the London School of Hygiene
and Tropical Medicine*

Prof. Dr. Jan Pronk

*Former Minister for Development
Cooperation and Environment,
the Netherlands;
Special Representative of the Secretary
General of the United Nations in Sudan*

Count Jacques Rogge

*President International Olympic
Committee (IOC)*

Archbishop em. Desmond Tutu

Nobel Peace Prize 1984

Baron Prof. Dr. Benjamin Van Camp

*Chairman UZ Brussel;
ProRector Vrije Universiteit Brussel*

Mrs. Sylviane Toporkoff

*Founder and Partner at Items International;
Founder and President of Global Forum;
Lecturer at Paris VIII University (Dauphine)*

Prof. Dr. Frank Vandenbroucke

*Former Flemish Minister of Education,
Belgium;
Professor at Katholieke Universiteit Leuven,
Universiteit Antwerpen and Universiteit van
Amsterdam*

Mr. Tony Vandeputte

*Honorary Delegate Administrator at
the Federation of Belgian Companies*

“ICT should no longer be a luxury good for the happy few, but a commodity for everyone, including those at the base of the pyramid... the other five billion persons in this world. This is what Close the Gap is all about.”

—
Archbishop em. Desmond Tutu

COUNSELLORS

Close the Gap's counsellors use their expertise and networks to support Close the Gap in further developing projects and partnerships. The duties and responsibilities vary greatly, depending on the counsellor's speciality.

Mr. Corjan Bast

Counsellor for North America

Mr. Bast seeks opportunities for building a network of contributing and strategic partners for Close the Gap by communicating and promoting its mission, which strongly aligns with his own personal goals. He is a Global Product Manager for ITpreneurs, a learning content and instructor provider for IT best practices training. He works closely with IT vendors and executives to discuss how to best leverage innovative learning solutions. In addition, he collaborates with industry professionals to publish articles and deliver presentations on the latest trends in IT and cloud computing.

Ms. Anne Clarke

Counsellor for Tanzania and Ethiopia

Anne Clarke's background is teaching and teacher education. Her current focus is online professional development for teachers, instructing courses for Harvard Graduate School of Education's WIDE World program. She is also an online mentor for Teachers Without Borders. After living for 12 years in Tanzania and Ethiopia, Anne believes technology is crucial to meeting the rapidly growing demand for quality education and vocational training in Africa. She hopes to support Close the Gap as it expands its activities in the region.

Mr. Remko Dalkmann

Counsellor for Andes Region Latin America

Mr. Dalkmann is a publicity professional who moved to Ecuador in 2011. He is interested in using his presence in Ecuador

for Close the Gap by assessing potential synergies with ICT development projects in Ecuador, Peru and Bolivia.

Mrs. Anne Herman

Counsellor for Africa

Mrs. Herman has a background in institutional and public policy development and has worked as a parliamentary advisor (Belgium) for 20 years, specialising in international issues. She has been involved in Close the Gap from the beginning and she coordinated one of the first school projects in Mali. As an international expert in development, she has conducted numerous monitoring and evaluation missions for a large variety of projects, funded by international donors.

Mrs. Herman contributes her extensive knowledge of development problems and policies in the field, especially in Africa.

Mr. Jean-François Soupizet

Principal Counsellor

Mr. Soupizet, a graduate of the French Graduate School of Economics, Statistics and Finance (ENSAE), is a doctor of economics at the Université Libre de Bruxelles and a member of the French think tank Futuribles International. He has mainly devoted his career to ICT in the field of development. Mr. Soupizet has held various positions in the French development cooperation, the United Nations and over the past 20 years in the European Commission, notably as Head of International Relations for the Information Society and Media Directorate General. He contributed, in particular, to the Community positions

“What struck me is the eagerness of all these young people in Africa to embrace that new technology, to connect to the world, to know what is happening, to learn, to discuss and to exchange. Each computer is a door to a huge library and a window on the world.”

—
Mrs. Anne Herman
Counsellor Close the Gap

for the World Summit on the Information-Society (WSIS Geneva, December 2003; Tunis, November 2005). Mr. Soupizet published 'La Fracture Numérique Nord-Sud', Economica, Paris 2005, and edited 'Nord et Sud Numériques' in 'Les Cahiers du Numérique', Hermès Science Europe, Paris 2002. Mr. Soupizet is well positioned to support Close the Gap in its strategic objectives.

Mr. Rafael Torres

Counsellor for Central America

Mr. Torres has a background in electricity and engineering and has many years of experience working in different posts in several countries. As a native of the Dominican Republic, he is very well placed to assess the needs of ICT4Dev in the Central American and Caribbean Region.

Mrs. Nel Wagner

Counsellor for Africa

Mrs. Wagner became interested in ICT issues through a PC donation from KPN to a school network in Africa. She was involved in the founding of the '1 million PCs for Africa Campaign' for SchoolNet Africa. Mrs. Wagner has shown a very strong commitment to connecting Close the Gap to World Links Zimbabwe and SchoolNet Uganda. She also sees opportunities in Suriname.

CLOSE THE GAP AND THE UNITED NATIONS

For Close the Gap, it is very important to liaise with the United Nations on ICT4Dev. Close the Gap has been recognised as a United Nations Global Compact (UNGC) signatory and is a member of the United Nations Global Alliance for ICT and Development (UN GAID). Since 2010, Close the Gap has also been a member of the United Nations Department of Public Information (UNDPI).



Ms. Anjanae Wilson

United Nations Department of Public Information (UNDPI)

The UNDPPI helps non-governmental organisations gain access to and disseminate information to the public about United Nations issues. Close the Gap has a permanent youth representative that represents the organisation at the United Nations headquarters in New York.

“In an increasingly technologically based global economy, ICT is essential for providing the information needed to enable persons to determine their own needs and empower them to actively meet them.”

Ms. Anjanae Wilson
Close the Gap's Youth Representative
at the United Nations in New York

“In an increasingly technologically based global economy, ICT is essential for providing the information needed to enable persons to determine their own needs and empower them to actively meet them. Close the Gap is an important player in the effort to increase access to this powerful tool.

The United Nations Department of Public Information, NGO Section or UN DPI-NGO, was established to actively assist and provide the resources necessary to assist NGOs in disseminating information about the United Nations' efforts around the world. As a part of the United Nations' growing commitment to youth, UN DPI-NGO provided a venue for youth involvement through the development of the position of youth representative. My roles as a UN Youth Representative for Close the Gap are that of liaison, advocate, and student. Naturally, I act as a liaison between the United Nations and Close the Gap, providing relevant information about activities and initiatives promoted by the United Nations here in New York City. I am also a liaison between Close the Gap and other NGOs that could potentially act as partners in our commitment to bridging the digital divide and those who sponsor programmes in the developing world that are in need of our services. As an advocate, I have had the opportunity to promote the role of ICT in human rights-based social work and global development to audiences comprised of fellow youth representatives, educators, students, individuals in the private sector, and charitable organisations.

As a student who, before my relationship with Close the Gap, would not have fully considered the pivotal role of ICT in the promotion of human rights and realising the Millennium Development Goals, I have learned so much within a very short period. Close the Gap has given me a rare opportunity to learn of the many faces of ICT and its role in peace, health, education, gender equality, and environmental sustainability. My time with Close the Gap has transformed me into a future leader in global social work and fostered within me a lifetime commitment to promote the inclusion of ICT in the global development discourse.”

United Nations Global Compact (UNGC)

The UNGC is a strategic policy initiative for businesses that are committed to aligning their operations and strategies with ten universally accepted principles in the areas of human rights, labour, environment and anti-corruption. Businesses, as primary drivers of globalisation, can help ensure that markets, commerce, technology and finance advance in ways that benefit economies and societies everywhere.



Endorsed by chief executives, the Global Compact is a practical framework for the development, implementation and disclosure of sustainability policies and practices, offering participants a wide spectrum of work streams, management tools and resources — all designed to help advance sustainable business models and markets.

For Close the Gap, participation in the UNGC is a great opportunity to share knowledge about sustainable development and another step in the process of emphasising the importance of high standards in its worldwide activities.

The UN Global Compact has two main objectives:

1. Catalyse actions in support of broader UN goals, including the Millennium Development Goals.
2. Mainstream the following ten principles in business activities around the world:

Human Rights

- Principle 1: businesses should support and respect the protection of internationally proclaimed human rights; and
- Principle 2: make sure that they are not complicit in human rights abuses.

Labour

- Principle 3: businesses should uphold the freedom of association and the effective recognition of the right to collective bargaining;
- Principle 4: the elimination of all forms of forced and compulsory labour;
- Principle 5: the effective abolition of child labour; and
- Principle 6: the elimination of discrimination in respect of employment and occupation.

Environment

- Principle 7: businesses should support a precautionary approach to environmental challenges;
- Principle 8: undertake initiatives to promote greater environmental responsibility, and
- Principle 9: encourage the development and diffusion of environmentally friendly technologies.

Anti-Corruption

- Principle 10: businesses should work against corruption in all its forms, including extortion and bribery.

A multitude of projects have demonstrated that ICT can contribute directly or indirectly to various goals that are targeted by the Millennium Development Goals. Through its sister organisation WorldLoop, Close the Gap ensures the end-of-life management of IT assets (Principle 8) and through partnerships with organisations that support environmentally friendly technologies, Close the Gap supports Principle 9.

United Nations Global Alliance for ICT and Development (UN GAID)



The UN GAID is a global forum that comprehensively addresses cross-cutting issues related to ICT and development. UN GAID wants to create an open and inclusive platform that could broaden the dialogue on innovative ways of harnessing ICT for advancing development. To accomplish this, UN GAID mainstreams the global ICT agenda into the broader United Nations agenda.

All UN GAID members are committed to the following ideals:

- Demonstrate leadership by advancing universal access to ICT.
- Raise the awareness of policy-makers on ICT4Dev issues.
- Facilitate identification of technological solutions for specific development goals.
- Produce practical solutions, share best practices and knowledge to bridge the digital divide.
- Engage in policy dialogues around specific topics of mutual interest put forward for discussion.
- Share innovative business models for pro-poor investment, economic growth and empowerment of people living in poverty.

2012 AT A GLANCE

FACTS AND FIGURES 2012

61,586

COMPUTER ASSETS DONATED

15,453

COMPUTER ASSETS
IMPLEMENTED IN PROJECTS⁷

93

COMPANIES INVOLVED IN
DONATIONS IN 2012

450

ORGANISATIONS SUPPORTED
IN 26 COUNTRIES

EVENTS IN 2012

3 - 6 JANUARY

First project supported in Senegal at Missirah primary school in Toubacouta

In January Close the Gap supported its first educational project in Senegal. The Belgian family Martens took laptops to the Missirah primary school to enable the teachers to use ICT as a teaching tool.



Missirah primary school in Toubacouta

1 FEBRUARY

New Year's reception and official inauguration of Close the Gap's new offices at Karel Van Miert Building

On 1 February Close the Gap organised a New Year's Drink for the inauguration of its new offices in the buildings of the Vrije Universiteit Brussel (VUB). It was a great opportunity to thank all its partners and the VUB in particular for their support for Close the Gap over the years. Close the Gap welcomed over 75 people from its main partner organisations. Mr. Carl Michiels, Chair of the Direction Committee of the Belgian Development Agency, presented Close the Gap's past and current challenges, as well as some of the recent achievements of the e-waste project.

“Close the Gap is able to touch the cold heart of the business world with the warm soul of societal involvement.”

—
Mr. Carl Michiels

Chair of the Direction Committee
of the Belgian Development
Agency



14 - 16 MARCH

Close the Gap attended United Nations Pan-African Forum on e-waste

Close the Gap attended the Pan-African Forum on e-waste, hosted by the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) in Nairobi, Kenya. The outcome was hugely successful and has opened the door to foster future collaborative relationships with strategic partners in Europe, Kenya and the four other East African Community countries Burundi, Rwanda, Tanzania and Uganda. The Pan-African Forum is a platform of engagement for relevant stakeholders in the private sector, government, public sector and academia to address the e-waste issues present in Africa. Close the Gap was also able to engage with its main service partner Computers for Schools Kenya (CFSK) and visited some of the recently implemented school projects in the suburbs of Nairobi.



Close the Gap and WordPC at the UNEP conference

2 MAY

Close the Gap keynote speaker at Microsoft's Innovate4Good

Microsoft Innovate4Good is a global community enabling young people aged 15-24 to collaborate, inspire and support each other while working on technological projects that could make the difference in creating a better future. There are already 1,000 youngsters involved in the community. They meet around the world at local events and in a global online community to provide and receive support for their ideas and concrete projects. To this community, Microsoft brings the knowledge that the company, its employees and alumni have gained over more than 30 years of innovation, business and technology expertise as well as active engagement in more than 100 countries around the world. The first European Innovate4Good day took place in May 2012 in Brussels. During this event, Close the Gap gave a presentation on

how NGOs are using technology to address the societal issues of today, inspiring 120 youngsters.



Microsoft Innovate4good

3 MAY

Strategic partner day in Rotterdam

Close the Gap welcomed its strategic partners and key donors to the Strategic Partner Day, which was hosted by Deloitte Netherlands in their new headquarters at Rotterdam, the tallest business building in the Benelux. During the meeting Close the Gap's past, current and future opportunities were presented to the audience of 40 people. There was also a brainstorming activity, where Close the Gap's partners shared their visions on the organisation's projects and future.



Strategic partner day in Rotterdam

12 MAY

Lions Club commits its support to Close the Gap

Olivier Vanden Eynde was invited as keynote speaker for the Lions Convention District Limburg in Hasselt. The event resulted in promising bilateral contacts and a commitment from the Lions Club to support Close the Gap through a financial donation for its projects in developing countries.



Mr. Guy Schalenbourg (Governor Lions Club Limburg, Antwerp and Vlaams-Brabant) and Sr. Jeanne Devos

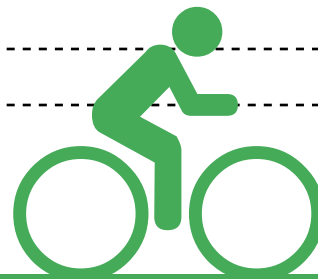
24 MAY

PC Solidarity information session

Close the Gap and the King Baudouin Foundation organised an information session for all projects selected for the fifth PC Solidarity call. The jury selected 45 Belgian projects. A total of 501 computers were distributed throughout 2012.



PC Solidarity information session

**8 JUNE****Close the Gap represented at the official launch of Rio+20 in Paris**

At the United Nations Rio+20 Conference held in June 2012, world leaders, along with thousands of participants from governments, the private sector, NGOs and other groups, came together to discuss how to reduce poverty, advance social equity and ensure environmental protection on an ever more crowded planet to achieve the future we want. 'Club France Rio+20', a French network of businesses, communities, unions, associations and national and European governments, also met to share ideas and reflect on a common statement on sustainable development that was presented at the United Nations conference. Close the Gap was also represented in the French network, which numbers 800 members, to share its experience on sustainable development.

13 JUNE AND 13 SEPTEMBER**Close the Gap behind the scenes: 'Friends of' days in France and Belgium**

Close the Gap organised its 'Friends of' days at the premises of its refurbishment partner in Paris (France) and Mechelen (Belgium). All 'Friends of Close the Gap' were invited to visit the warehouse and reconditioning centre in order to better understand how Close the Gap's logistics partner refurbishes computers and performs the data wipe. Close the Gap was very pleased to see many new potential French donors during this exciting event.



'Friends of' day in Belgium

21 JUNE**208 cyclists for the second edition of Bike to Close the Gap**

Close the Gap's strategic partner DNS Belgium organised the second edition of the cycling event Bike to Close the Gap. 208 cyclists from 40 ICT-related companies and Close the Gap's partners climbed the Paterberg in Kluisbergen multiple times, raising a total of €55,000 for PC Solidarity, Close the Gap's project that aims to bridge the local digital divide.

**17 JULY****Close the Gap supports the Desmond & Leah Tutu Legacy Foundation**

Close the Gap's Chairman and Managing Director were invited for a kick-off meeting of the recently created 'Desmond & Leah Tutu Legacy Foundation' in Cape Town (South Africa) to serve their Special Advisory Council in a honorary position. The members of this council provide the Legacy Foundation with their expertise and access to their networks and are invited to attend specific board meetings in this capacity. They will not vote nor will they bear any fiduciary responsibility for the Foundation. The Executive Director of the Foundation will provide Close the Gap's Chairman and Managing Director with updates on the work of the Foundation on a regular basis.

"It's a real pleasure and strong empowerment for the Desmond & Leah Tutu Legacy Foundation to have Close the Gap's Chairman and Managing Director to serve on our Special Advisory Council."

Ms. Mpho Tutu

Executive Director Desmond & Leah Tutu Legacy Foundation

2 AUGUST
Deloitte Belgium gave ICT classes in Tanzania

An enthusiastic team of five Deloitte volunteers travelled to Tanzania to take part in a corporate responsibility project focusing on sustainability in collaboration with the NGOs' Global Resource Alliance (GRA) and WeForest. Their work included supporting Buhare school and the University of Arusha in Musoma by giving IT classes to students and the NGOs' local employees on computers provided by Close the Gap.



Deloitte team in Tanzania

27-31 AUGUST
Computers for universities in Uganda

A Close the Gap delegation visited Uganda to engage with universities to increase students' and researchers' access to ICT. Uganda has 34 universities nationwide, of which 29 are private institutions. In collaboration with the Ugandan Embassy in Brussels and with the Honorary Consul for Uganda in Belgium, four universities were targeted for potential extensive collaboration in the near future: Uganda Martyrs University, Mbarara University of Science and Technology, Mukono Christian University and Mountains of the Moon University.



Martyrs Christian University, Uganda

“Our classes took the form of train-the-trainer sessions and covered general subjects like Word, Excel and Power-Point, but also other topics, such as using the Internet, making a website and online security. For us teachers, it was incredibly rewarding to see how much progress our students made in just two weeks’ time.”

—
Ms. Leen Buyens

Senior Consultant Deloitte Consulting



24 SEPTEMBER**Desmond Tutu refurbishes Close the Gap's 250,000th computer asset in the Netherlands**

On 24 September Close the Gap celebrated an important milestone: the donation of the 250,000th computer asset to Close the Gap from its donors in Europe. During a special event organised at Close the Gap's computer refurbishment centre in Culemborg (the Netherlands), Archbishop em. Desmond Tutu, a 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 asset. Close the Gap also announced new partnerships and the reinforcement of its green initiatives. Some 250 people participated in the event, including his Royal Highness Prince Carlos de Bourbon de Parme, a member of the Dutch royal family, who is known to be a staunch defender of the environment.

**11 OCTOBER****Focus on Close the Gap's collaboration with KLM during the KLM CSR days**

During the KLM CSR days, KLM employees had the opportunity to gain more insight into KLM's activities related to corporate social responsibility (CSR). For Close the Gap, this was a unique opportunity to meet employees of its partner organisation and to explain to them directly the impact of their collaboration in terms of computer donations and cargo shipments for millions of people all over the world.



KLM Cargo

23 OCTOBER**Close the Gap inspired students at the International School of Brussels**

The International School of Brussels (ISB) hosted a very special annual career event for its students in welcoming guest speakers for the annual 'Beyond ISB day'. Olivier Vanden Eynde gave an inspiring speech about his vision on the working world within the social entrepreneurial industry. The objective of the day was to give students the opportunity to learn about the career experiences of others within their area of professional expertise and specific sector experience. ISB has been donating its decommissioned computers to Close the Gap since 2012 and is proposing internships for its students at Close the Gap.



Beyond ISB Day

24 OCTOBER

Close the Gap presents its view on ICT4Development at “Debating development” at the University of Antwerp

“Bits for Development, windows of opportunities or further burden?” was the topic of the conference that took place at the University of Antwerp. Close the Gap was invited to join the panel to discuss this topic with an audience of 200 students.

12 NOVEMBER

CharITy Foundation and ICT MEDIA give coverage to Close the Gap on CIO Day in the Netherlands

The subject of the 2012 CIO day was ‘The Past is the Future: A CIO should make his company ready for the future by means of ICT’. During the evening programme, a VIP CIO dinner was organised with more than 500 senior IT executives. A Close the Gap delegation was invited to use the occasion to network with the high-potential participants of this event. Close the Gap, together with WorldLoop, were showcased as a best practice for using end-of-lease computers for sustainable ICT4Dev projects.



Mr. Tamme Wierenga, Chairman CharITy and IT Manager Essent-RWE

“As the founder of the CharITy Foundation, I’m very proud that we could enable the result-oriented involvement from a critical mass of key CIOs from the Netherlands into the Close the Gap programme. During the event with Archbishop Desmond Tutu in September 2012, I have testified that CharITy, and myself as founder, will continue to empower this great ‘ICT for Development’ work.”

—
Mr. Rob Beijleveld
Founder CharITy

15 NOVEMBER

Close the Gap and Greenpeace introduced their approach to the ICT society in the opening of The Datacenter Group’s new centre in Delft (the Netherlands)

The Datacenter Group opened their new data centre in Delft with a special event. Close the Gap and Greenpeace were invited to present their views on the challenges of the modern ICT society and the latest developments on sustainability.



Ms. Sanne van Keulen, Greenpeace

29 NOVEMBER

Belgian CIOs collect 13,000 computer assets for Close the Gap

IT Executives’ Circle created the CIO-PE campaign in 2011 to raise awareness of the digital divide among Belgian CIOs and to encourage them to donate their companies’ decommissioned computers to help projects in developing countries. For two years in a row, the campaign has been a huge success: the Belgian companies collected 13,000 computer assets in one year, so exceeding the original goal of 10,000 computer assets by the end of 2012.



From left to right: Ms. Anne De Baetzelier (Moderator), Ms. Aurélie Dupont (Operations Director, Close the Gap), Mr. Rudi Peeters (CIO, KBC), Mr. Daniel Lebeau (CIO, GSK), Mr. André Vanden Camp (COO and CIO, AXA), Mr. Alain Vande Kerkhove (Managing Director, The Executives’ Circle)



“Every year I gather CIOs from all over Belgium to share about best practices in the field. For a couple of years now, I have also wanted to encourage them to look a step further by supporting social projects. I’m delighted to see the motivation of the CIOs in supporting Close the Gap.”

—
Mr. Alain Vande Kerkhove
Managing Director The Executives’ Circle



29-30 NOVEMBER

Close the Gap keynote speaker at EuroCIO

Each year, EuroCIO’s conference gathers CIOs from companies all over Europe to exchange views on new trends in the world of ICT. At this year’s conference in Brussels, Ms. Neelie Kroes, Commissioner for the Digital Agenda, highlighted the importance of collaboration between the CIOs of different companies. After a keynote speech from Mr. Michael Gorriz, CIO Daimler, Mr. Olivier Vanden Eynde, Managing Director Close the Gap, took the floor to highlight the opportunity for CIOs to participate in bridging the digital divide and so help their companies contribute to the Millennium Development Goals.



“EuroCIO will further contribute in the coming years by offering Close the Gap the possibility of directly addressing all members at the European level to create long-lasting relationships.”

—
Mr. Peter Hagedoorn
Secretary-General EuroCIO

4 DECEMBER

WorldLoop holds first Ambassador Day with key stakeholders

Close the Gap’s partner WorldLoop brought together key stakeholders in sustainable ICT4Dev and e-waste management at Umicore’s Precious Metals Refinery in Hoboken Belgium (Antwerp). The purpose of the meeting was to have an open dialogue on the importance of public-private partnerships to provide sustainable end-of-life solutions for ICT equipment used in development projects. Some 80 people participated in the event, which included messages from key stakeholders, including Mr. Thomas Leysen (Chairman Umicore and KBC Bank Group), Mr. Dan Mesis (Deputy Secretary Kenyan Ministry of Environment and Mineral Resources) and Mr. Peter Sabbe (CEO Recupel). The event encouraged networking and an open forum for questions and discussions on the realities of the future of ICT and e-waste recycling in developing countries.



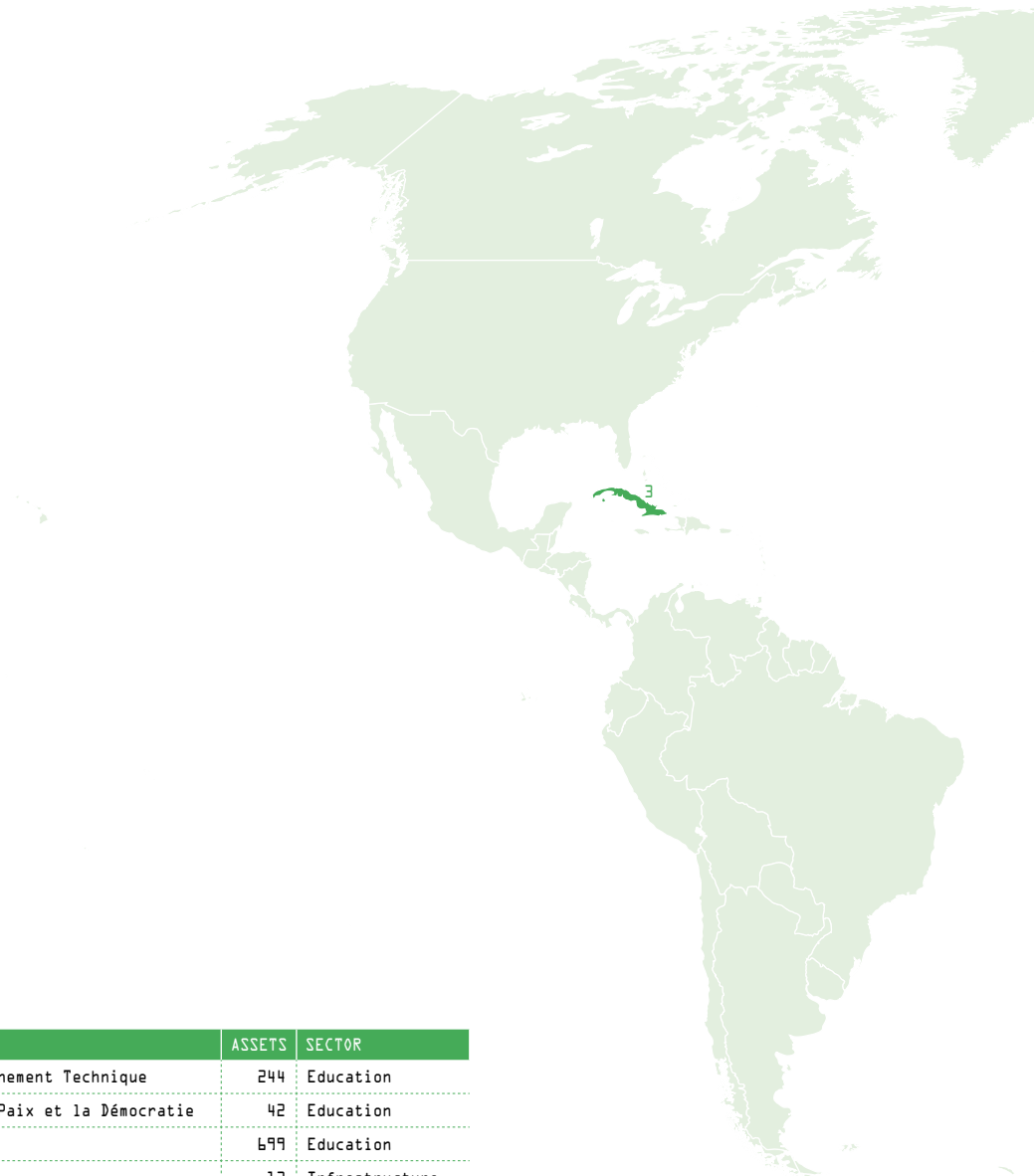
Mr. Peter Sabbe, CEO Recupel and Mr. Dan Mesis, Deputy Secretary Ministry of Environment and Mineral Resources Kenya

“EuroCIO, the European umbrella organisation covering a great number of national CIO organisations and altogether over 600 larger corporations, wholeheartedly endorses the goals of Close the Gap. Having over 600,000 ICT workers in all these companies means that EuroCIO members are potentially great contributors to Close the Gap. Close the Gap already has good contacts with some of our national organisations (CIO-Platform Netherlands, CIO-Forum Belgium, CIGREF France, VOICE Germany) and many of them already contribute to Close the Gap. EuroCIO will further contribute in the coming years by offering Close the Gap the possibility of directly addressing all members at the European level to create long-lasting relationships.”

PROJECT OVERVIEW 2012

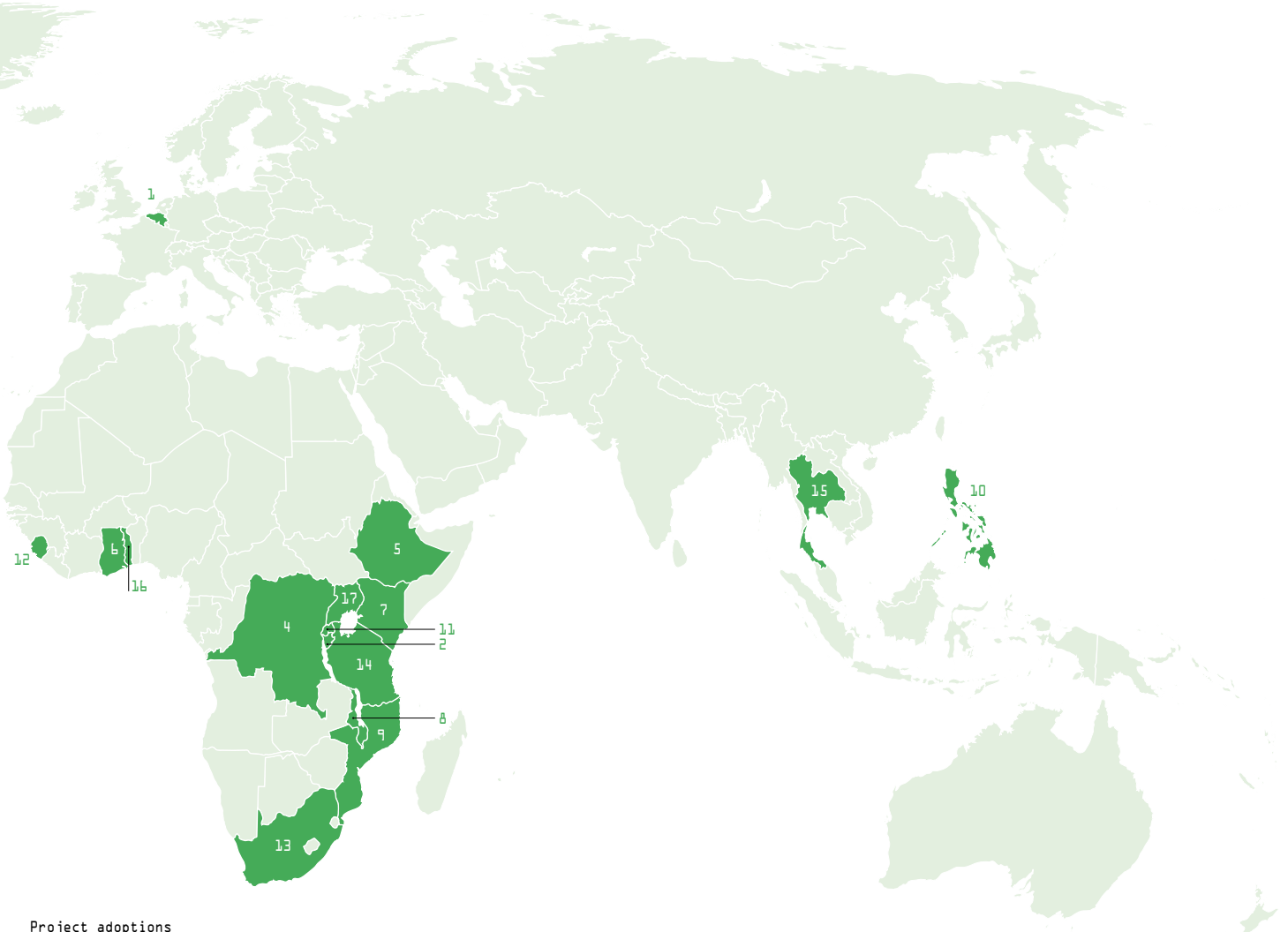
We have only listed projects where more than 30 computer assets were delivered. Please note that the following projects have been supported as well:

Burkina Faso: Makoumi, Noord-Zuid;
Cameroun: Knowledge for Children;
Colombia: Te Busco Colombia; **DRC:** Kolwezi, Villages Bondeko, Zoological Society of Milwaukee County; **Ethiopia:** Wollega University; **Nepal:** Saancho;
Nigeria: The Bridge; **Pakistan:** Laptops for schools; **Rwanda:** Kabgayi, Caritas;
Senegal: Ecole de Missirah; **Uganda:** Kinderhulp Afrika; **Zambia:** Abantu Zambia



Regular projects

COUNTRY	PROJECT NAME	ASSETS	SECTOR
Burundi (2)	Bureau d'Etudes de l'Enseignement Technique	244	Education
	Fondation pour l'Unité, la Paix et la Démocratie	42	Education
	Université du Burundi	699	Education
D.R.C. (4)	Energy Assistance	12	Infrastructure
	Bridge the digital divide in Butembo	603	Education
	Bandundu ICT project	33	Education
	Sensorial Handicap	32	Education
Ghana (6)	Ghana Kwahu Aduamoah	69	Education
	Zuarungu ICT project	75	Education
Malawi (8)	Blantyre School	38	Education
Mozambique (9)	Disop Mozambique	130	Employment
Philippines (10)	Kids Foundation	56	Education
Rwanda (11)	SOS Children's Villages Rwanda	104	Education
	Ruhengeri Institute of Higher Education	630	Education
Sierra Leone (12)	Plan Sierra Leone	35	Education
	Viafrica	60	Education
South Africa (13)	Desmond Tutu HIV foundation	52	Health
Tanzania (14)	Computers for special needs for Misungwi school	72	Education
	Deloitte Belgium's ICT and training project	84	Education
	St-Joseph Vocational Training Centre	33	Education
	Computers for special needs for Misungwi school	72	Education
	Deloitte Belgium's ICT and training project	84	Education
	St-Joseph Vocational Training Centre	33	Education
	YouBridge	25	Education
Togo (16)	ESE Togo	36	Education
Uganda (17)	Educaids Uganda	188	Education



Project adoptions

COUNTRY	PROJECT NAME	ASSETS	SECTOR	ADOPTER
Belgium (1)	ICT for non-profit organisations in Belgium	1637	Employment	DNS Belgium
	Belgacom Foundation	367	Education	Belgacom
	BeFace	39	Social	Beface
	Telenet Foundation	23	Social	Telenet
	Bednet	102	Health	DNS Belgium, Belgacom
	Take Off	47	Health	DNS Belgium
	Federatie Basiseducatie	400	Education	DNS Belgium
	Network for Teaching Entrepreneurship	39	Education	Huawei
Burundi (2)	Université du Burundi	549	Education	VLIR-UOS
Cuba (3)	Instituto Superior Politécnico José Antonio Echeverría	39	Education	VLIR-UOS
D.R.C. (4)	Benelux Afro Center	334	Education	Fondation Air France
Ethiopia (5)	Jimma University	640	Education	VLIR-UOS
Ghana (6)	Jan van Ieperen Fonds supports schools in Ghana	126	Education	Jan van Ieperen Fonds
Kenya (7)	Computers for Schools Kenya	1800	Education	DNS Belgium
	Mombasa Polytechnic University College	480	Education	DNS Belgium
	Moi University	466	Education	VLIR-UOS
Philippines (10)	Benguet State University	448	Education	VLIR-UOS
Rwanda (11)	Alliance High School	104	Education	DNS Belgium
	TEVSA network	210	Education	Stichting Gillès
South Africa (13)	Support Orphans in Southern Africa	20	Youth Care	Ricoh Netherlands
Tanzania (14)	Affordable Computers and Technology for Tanzania	440	Education	Rabobank
	School project Tanzania	72	Education	DNS Belgium, Stichting Gillès, Rabobank
Thailand (15)	Fund Isaan	204	Education	Deloitte Belgium
Uganda (17)	Mountains of the Moon University	324	Education	Deloitte SE
	ICT for Schools in Uganda	2500	Education	DNS Belgium

PROJECTS IN DEVELOPING AND EMERGING COUNTRIES

Close the Gap wants to provide a comprehensive and sustainable approach from the pick-up of the equipment at the donor company to the refurbishment, project selection, local installation of the computers and on-site training. Through its partner WorldLoop, Close the Gap also 'closes the loop' by providing local recycling facilities once the IT equipment reaches the end of its life.



PHASE 1: COLLECTION

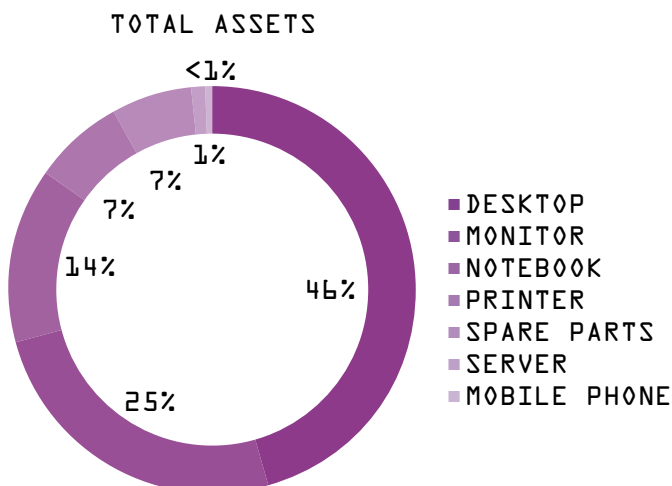
Close the Gap collects high-quality used ICT equipment from European companies and organisations. The equipment is collected in a professional way and at no cost to the donor.

Close the Gap organises the collection of used ICT hardware equipment and obviously focuses on A-brand high-quality equipment (from a cosmetic as well as technical point of view). However, Close the Gap is aware that it is not easy for companies to make a selection within its decommissioned equipment and that's why Close the Gap is ready to collect a certain amount of equipment that does not comply with the minimum specifications, depending on the volume and overall quality of the donation. In the spirit of partnership and long-term collaboration, Close the Gap aims to be a 'one stop shop' for the donating companies. The due diligence is made on a case-by-case basis, mainly taking into account the following conditions:

Volume

Close the Gap's collaborations start with a minimum volume of about 30 asset donations (desktops, screens, etc.), preferably coming from the same batch of equipment. Not only does this allow Close the Gap to provide a project with same-specification computers, but it also saves on overhead costs.

The digital divide will not be bridged by sending obsolete equipment to the South and Close the Gap is committed to providing beneficiary projects with high-performance equipment only.



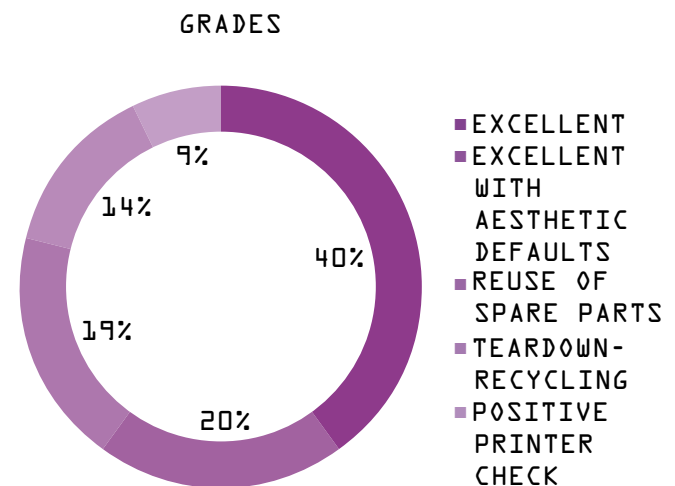
“As a large company on the Belgian market, Axa sees it as its duty to help the most vulnerable. The IT equipment we donate to Close the Gap is still very functional. It’s an opportunity for us to be able to give genuine new life to these tools for people who have fewer chances.”

—
Mr. André Van Camp
CIO and COO AXA Belgium

Specifications

Close the Gap works on the basis of evolving minimum specification requirements, which are currently*:

- **Desktops:** Pentium IV 2.4 GHz
- **Screens:** 15” TFT flat screens
- **Laptops and netbooks:** Pentium Centrino 1.6 GHz
- **Printers:** laser jet and multifunctional printers (MFPs)
- **Smartphones and tablets**
- **Networking equipment** (routers, servers, etc.)
- **Thin-Client workstations**



* These specifications might change in the course of 2013.

PHASE 2: REFURBISHMENT

Once the equipment has been collected and shipped to the various refurbishment plants in Europe, Close the Gap's logistics partner starts the refurbishing process. As a result of a restricted call for tenders at the European level, the Dutch company Flection International BV, an Arrow company, has been selected as Close the Gap's preferred logistics and refurbishing partner.

During the **check-in and registration**, the status of the received equipment is evaluated, the computer's serial and asset numbers are registered and every asset is given a unique barcode to enable easy tracking and tracing.

The **reconditioning** of the computers consists of a power-on switch test, internal and external cleaning, a virus scan, an upgrade of the computers if necessary and a durability test. The monitors go through durability and colour testing, are cleaned and checked for damage. All data is wiped using a Blancco-certified data wiping process.

This data removal process complies with the strictest requirements of NATO and the US Ministry of Defense. After refurbishing, a new keyboard, mouse, headphones and adequate software are added.

About six weeks after the collection, each donor receives a full **status report** indicating the quality of each donated asset, listed according to its original serial number and tracking number – if used. Furthermore, a data wipe certificate that guarantees all files have been erased is given to donors.



Check-in and registration



Reconditioning



Datawipe

Obsolete equipment that cannot be reused in projects or sold to third parties is destructed and recycled. In this case, a certificate of destruction is provided to the donor.

Close the Gap is committed to providing beneficiary projects with high-performance equipment only. If the quality and performance of the donated equipment does not meet the set minimum specifications or if there is significant short time overstock causing high storage costs, it is sold to third-party brokerage firms, while respecting conditions agreed on with the donors. The income generated is used to source computer assets that are not available in donations but needed in projects and to finance Close the Gap's operations and project development.

Through its logistics partner Flection Int. (part of the Arrow Group), Close the Gap is able to refurbish computers locally thanks to a worldwide network of refurbishment centres. Flection is an active member of the StEP Initiative (Stop the E-waste Problem).

Flection warehouses hold all the required Waste of Electrical and Electronic Equipment (WEEE) collection permits and certifications. Flection implements and holds certificates for ISO 9001, ISO 14001 and OHSAS 18001.

If equipment fails tests and is not suitable for reuse, the product will be disassembled and materials and waste disposal handed over to European-approved downstream recyclers. This whole process is in compliance with the WEEE Directive and the Basel Convention. This way, Close the Gap and Flection implement a 0% landfill policy and will never ship malfunctioning equipment or hazardous waste to their projects in developing countries.

“Supporting Close the Gap is a way to help society: you address the knowledge gap of poor countries.”

Mr. Daniel Lebeau
CIO Glaxo Smith Kline

“I hope you are like me: you would like to help society, your company and your region at the same time. Supporting Close the Gap is a way to help society: you address the knowledge gap of poor countries. It also helps the company; Close the Gap is extremely well organised: the logistics is there, they clean your PC, they provide certificates, they have agreements with KLM, they partner with Microsoft for the licences,... It's very professional. In the end, you can help young entrepreneurs to develop their mission in many European countries.”

PHASE 3: PROJECT SELECTION

Close the Gap evaluates and selects projects that focus on both the individual and his or her community. The projects selected cover various fields, such as education, health, environment, microfinance, research, socio-cultural activities and good governance. Close the Gap supports projects in developing and emerging countries all around the world. Close the Gap selects projects based on several factors: the existence of a local infrastructure allowing the installation of computers (electricity, security, etc.), local capacities (IT knowledge, training opportunities, etc.), the servicing plan, the pedagogical scenario, the respect of the environment and especially the added value the use of IT equipment would bring to the project.

The collaborations usually start with a minimum of 20 computers in order to be as efficient as possible with respect to dealing with export and import regulations and logistics. Close the Gap is subject to the economies of scale.

Close the Gap uses selection criteria when it comes to the projects supported. Thanks to the strict conditions, Close the Gap guarantees a more sustainable use of the computers locally.

Close the Gap adopts a demand-driven approach, i.e. it only sends computers to projects that demonstrate their need for ICT equipment.



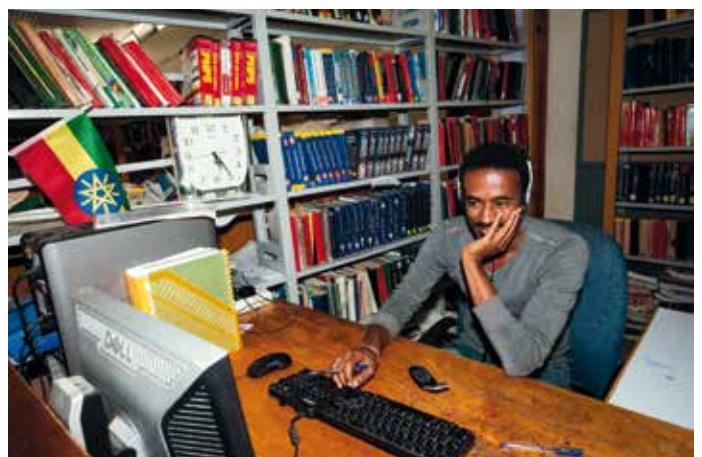
Sokoine University of Agriculture, Morogo, Tanzania



The Belgium Campus, Pretoria, South Africa



Microfinance project in Cameroon



Mekele University, Ethiopia

PHASE 4: TRANSPORT

The computer equipment is packed for sea or air transport to the developing or emerging country. The projects selected are asked to contribute to the refurbishing and transportation costs, unless a partnering company expresses a wish to adopt a particular project. Close the Gap helps project applicants by looking for the most cost-efficient transport solution, by ship or plane, depending on the destination and volume. KLM Royal Dutch Airlines has been a very loyal and reliable partner since Close the Gap's

very beginning. As world leader in the sector, Air France/KLM strive for profitable growth while working tirelessly to protect the environment and ensure social progress. They are building the future business by rolling out innovative products and tailored services to best meet the expectations of their customers. KLM supports Close the Gap in different ways. Their greatest support is the offer of stand-by cargo shipments to KLM destinations.



KLM Cargo

“KLM has been supporting Close the Gap from the onset in 2004 and has since donated over 13,500 computer assets, giving people in developing countries access to knowledge and education.”

—
Mr. Jappe Blaauw
EVP KLM Information Services & CIO

“KLM has been supporting Close the Gap from the onset in 2004 and has since donated over 13,500 computer assets, giving people in developing countries access to knowledge and education.

In 2006 KLM Cargo decided to go a step further by offering Close the Gap up to 50,000 euros annually towards the transport of decommissioned computers to projects in developing and emerging countries. Therefore, we work in close cooperation with Kenya Airways for destinations in East Africa where KLM does not have direct flights. Since 2006 KLM has dedicated over a hundred flights to carry ICT material for reuse. In 2012 KLM shipped 2,749 computer assets to Ghana, Nigeria, Peru, Philippines, Rwanda, South Africa, Sudan, Tanzania, Thailand and Uganda.

Following in KLM's footsteps, Martinair and Transavia.com have also become donors to the Close the Gap organisation. Based in part on the enthusiastic response from KLM staff and passengers, Close the Gap currently has more than 2 million Flying Blue Miles available for field work in Africa and for launching new projects.

Within our CSR strategy it is important for us to involve our own employees as much as possible: KLM employees can submit their own private projects to Close the Gap. For the moment, we are also investigating the possibility of deploying our own ICT staff in Close the Gap projects, either by building ICT networks locally or by giving ICT training to local service partners.”



Mr. Jappe Blaauw, EVP KLM
Information Services & CIO

PHASE 5: INSTALLATION, MAINTENANCE AND TRAINING

Close the Gap works through local service partners in 12 African countries. The service partners work as intermediaries between Close the Gap and beneficiary organisations. They know and understand the local culture and challenges, have local project management expertise and ensure the sustainability of the projects. They are responsible for the preparation of local infrastructure, distribution and transport of computers to the beneficiaries, installation and maintenance of ICT equipment, and training project managers, teachers and users.

Based on a win-win situation, Close the Gap is creating a client-supplier relationship with its service partners. On the one hand, service partners make critical assessments of the quality of the projects supported as well as of the service level of Close the Gap's delivery. They provide innovative input and tools for improving Close the Gap's work. On the other hand, Close the Gap contributes to the creation of a sustainable financial and social entrepreneurial model for the service partners, which ultimately leads to being less dependent on funds coming from industrialised countries.

Over the past few years, Close the Gap's track record has demonstrated that newly established service partners in developing countries reach a maturity level within less than 18 months of a partnership. During this period, the service partners become well respected local organisations, creating significant employability opportunities. As a result, service partners are also increasing Close the Gap's local standing.

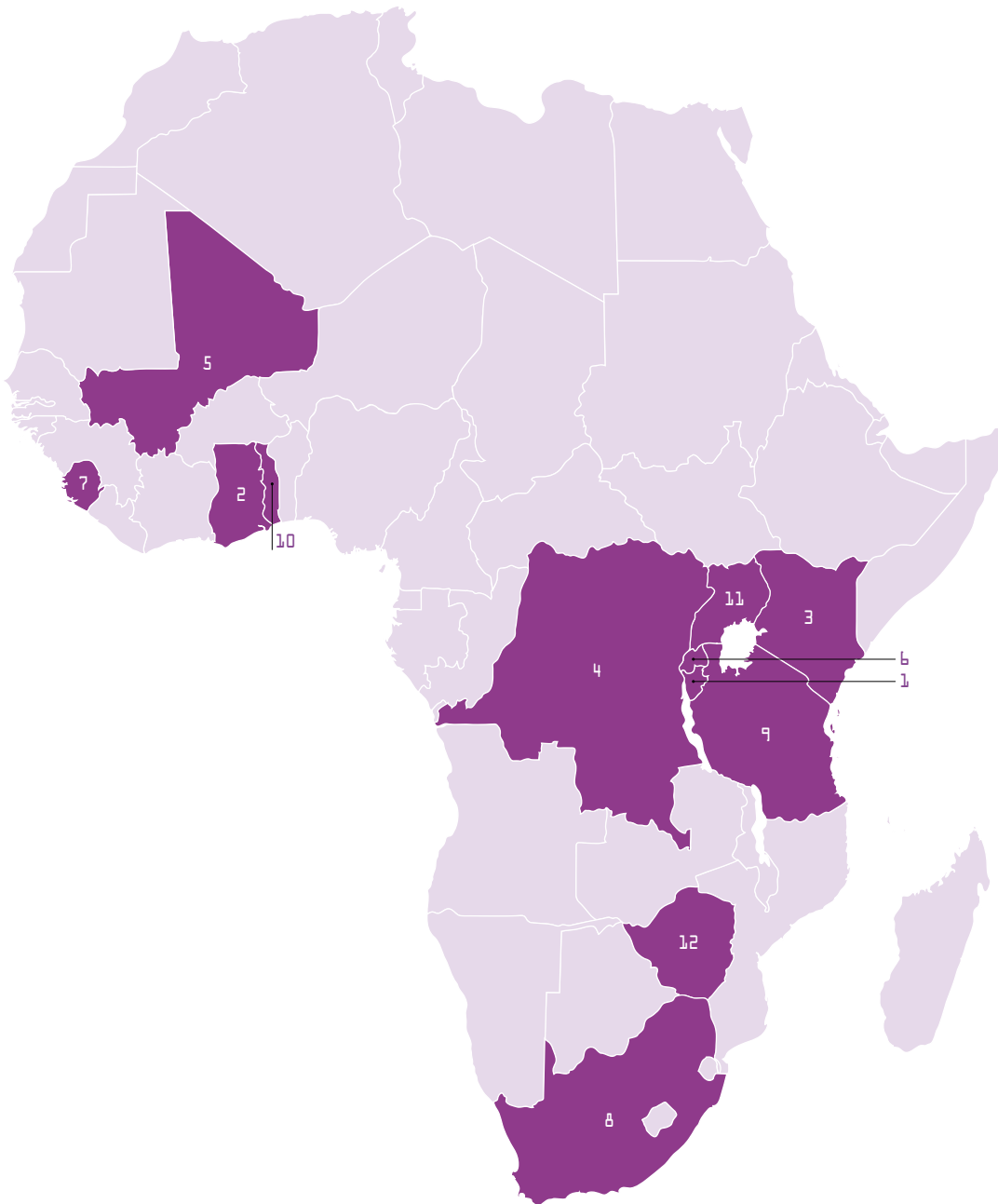
Today, Close the Gap has identified service partners in only some parts of Africa. However, Close the Gap would like to expand this model to include more countries in Africa and in other continents.

Working with service partners enables Close the Gap to work on a larger scale and it ensures the sustainability of computers donated to projects.

By working through local service partners, Close the Gap creates local employment in African countries.

OUR SERVICE PARTNERS IN 2012

Burundi (1)	Great Lakes Initiatives for Communities Empowerment (GLICE): starting collaboration	
Ghana (2)	Computers For Education and Development (CFED)	
Kenya (3)	Computers For Schools Kenya (CFSK)	
D.R.C. (4)	BeneLux Afro Centre (BAC)	
Mali (5)	Upsilon	
Rwanda (6)	ICT4All	
Sierra Leone (7)	Sierra eRiders	
South Africa (8)	Belgium Campus	
Tanzania (9)	Affordable Computers and Technology for Tanzania (ACTT) Viafrica	 
Togo (10)	Education Science Experience (ESE)	
Uganda (11)	Computers For Schools Uganda (CFSU) UConnect	 
Zimbabwe (12)	World Links Zimbabwe	



“With less than 5% of Tanzanian schools having computers, the ICT dream is still a long way off, but we believe that together we can change that.”

—
Mr. Robert Mafie
Director ACTT

“Quality education is key to a developed economy. Modern teaching tools, including computers, are key to quality education. With less than 5% of Tanzanian schools having computers, the ICT dream is still a long way off, but we believe that together we can change that. We at ACTT, in partnership with Close the Gap and with huge support from Rabobank in 2012, are geared towards making big changes and enhancing learning by supporting schools to set up computer labs. Since our collaboration, we have made big strides with the support of seven educational centres and schools. We are looking forward to reaching even more school and educational programmes, and our goal is to ensure effective and sustainable use of these resources, including support with educational software as well as teacher training and maintenance services.”

PHASE 6: SOFTWARE AND EXPERTISE

Projects can call upon Close the Gap's supporting partners for expertise in the following fields: specific software, special hardware, capacity building, funding expertise and infrastructure.

Belgian Raiffeisen Foundation (BRS) is Close the Gap's consultancy partner for microfinance projects. Additionally, Close the Gap supplies BRS projects with hardware.

Belgian Technical Cooperation (BTC/CTB) is an ad hoc consultant for the validation and the endorsement of Close the Gap's activities in developing countries. In the recent past, BTC/CTB has been Close the Gap's knowledge partner for e-waste management in the East African Community.

E-learning for Kids Foundation develops educational software for children. Close the Gap's projects can obtain this software at a preferential price.

Energy Assistance asbl/vzw is a consultancy partner for energy projects. Close the Gap delivers hardware for Energy Assistance's projects.

Ex-Change provides consultancy for management and sends volunteer experts to share knowledge and experience with local entrepreneurs.

International Institute for Communication and Development (IICD) is Close the Gap's knowledge and training partner in Uganda and Tanzania.

Ontuitive is e-learning software that offers structured support and immediate help and training for questions and challenges concerning Microsoft Office and Windows. Projects can opt for this free service.

Ukengee Foundation is Close the Gap's partner for the implementation of solar energy and eco-friendly computers.

UNESCO offers an open online training platform to provide trainers and trainees with free resources and training. Close the Gap supports this training platform by promoting it to its project partners. More info at www.opentrainingplatform.org.

The Flemish Interuniversity Council for University Development Cooperation (VLIR-UOS) supports research and higher education institutions in the South through partnerships with Flemish universities and higher education institutions. VLIR-UOS wants to improve the capacity of institutions in the South to better fulfil their societal roles. Close the Gap supplies computers to these partner universities in the South and to social projects supported by the educational institutions. VLIR-UOS guarantees sustainability by providing ICT maintenance and training to local staff.

The Flemish Association for Development Cooperation and Technical Assistance (VVOB) contributes to improving the quality of education in developing countries. Close the Gap provides educational institutions in the South that are partners with hardware.

YouBridge wants to create opportunities for young people all over the world by building a platform that allows people to send new laptops to developing countries.

Some supporting partners provide innovative low-energy solutions for the projects supported by Close the Gap. Reinforcing these partnerships will be a priority in 2013.

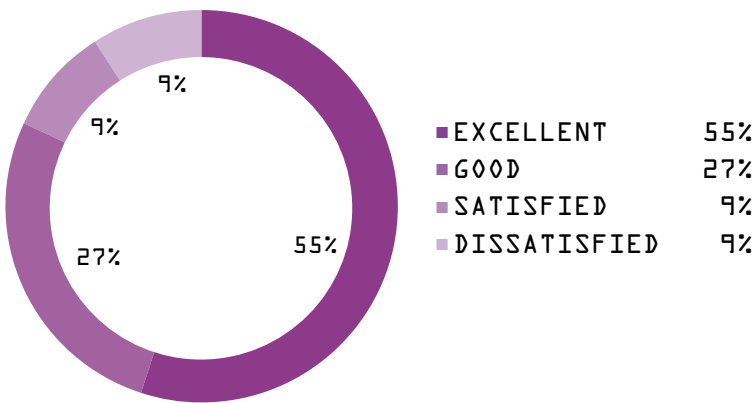


PHASE 7: FOLLOW-UP AND EVALUATION

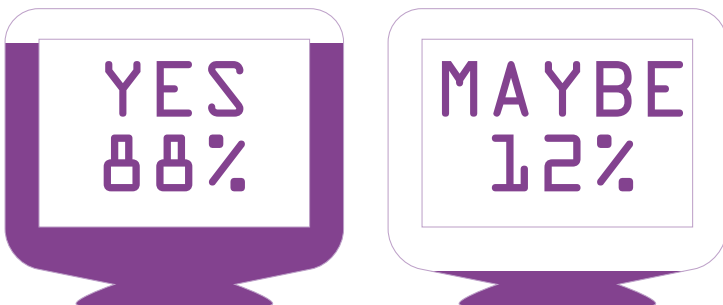
Close the Gap evaluates the quality of its products and services in order to improve future collaborations by means of a yearly survey of its project partners. The overall evaluation of the collaboration between Close the Gap and its partners in 2012 was positive: 91% of the partners evaluated the collaboration with Close the Gap as excellent, good or satisfactory.

Moreover, 88% of Close the Gap's partners are open to the idea of collaborating again in the future.⁸

HOW SATISFIED ARE YOU WITH CLOSE THE GAP'S SERVICES?



WOULD YOU BE READY TO COLLABORATE IN THE FUTURE?



“Our budgets are minimal. Thanks to the support of Close the Gap we were able to provide our staff with computers for communication, administration, reporting and documentation purposes. This contributes, in turn, to their motivation and ability to cope better with their daily workload.”

Ms. Lieve Milissen

Coordinator Centre for Children in Vulnerable Situations Uganda

⁸ Based on a 50% response rate.

PROJECT EXAMPLES

REGULAR PROJECTS

Project coordinators in the South are asked to contribute financially (partly with external co-funding) to the refurbishing and shipping costs of computers. The regular projects finance these costs without the intermediary involvement of Close the Gap.

Schoolchildren in Eastern Ghana learn practical ICT skills

Equipment: 70 computer assets

Project partners: Ghana Council, City of Antwerp

In Ghana, the study of ICT is part of the school curriculum but unfortunately most schools in rural areas do not have computers for the practical study of ICT programmes. That is why the umbrella organisation of Ghanaians in Belgium (Ghana Council), together with its member associations and the support of the City of Antwerp help children in rural areas of Ghana to gain access to ICT. After an initial successful pilot project by the Okwahu Asaase Aban Union at the beginning of 2012, the Northern Ghanaians Association in Belgium installed 35 computers in primary schools in Zuarungu in the Upper East region of Ghana in the first week of January 2013. The computers were installed in two centres that will be used by four primary schools. Thanks to these computers, ICT will no longer be a theoretical subject for 800 Ghanaian children, but something they can learn on a real computer on a day-to-day basis.



Ghana Kwahu Aduamoah, Ghana

Computers for special needs for Misungwi school, Tanzania

Equipment: 72 computer assets

Project partners: Viafrica, Optelec, Lions Club Moshi Kibo

Misungwi school is an institution for pupils with special needs located in the Mwanza region. The school welcomes 1,400 youngsters, including albinos, deaf and blind children, children with impaired vision and orphans. In February 2012 the Lions Club and Close the Gap together provided 70 computer assets,

including Braille keyboards and optical loupes. Close the Gap's service partner Viafrica took care of the installation and trained the teachers to use the special ICT equipment.



Misungwai School, Tanzania

Bridge the digital divide in Butembo, Democratic Republic of the Congo

Equipment: 603 computer assets

Project partners: A private fund managed by the King Baudouin Foundation

In most schools in and around Butembo, pupils only have theoretical knowledge of ICT because of the lack of computers. The WIMA network ("Stand up!" in Swahili) gathered all social actors in the Butembo region to make a joint order for computers and ensure the sustainability of the project by guaranteeing the maintenance of the computers. A private Belgian fund pre-financed 603 computer assets for 60 organisations ranging from primary and secondary schools, through to women's organisations and medical centres to youth organisations and mutualities in the vicinity of Butembo.



Bridge the digital divide in Butembo, D.R.C.

“In today’s society, being able to use a computer is a must in order to pursue university studies and ultimately perform on the job market. I would like my youngsters to master ICT skills in order to be equipped as well as possible to start their professional careers.”

—
Mr. Alfred Munyentwari

National Director SOS Children’s Villages Rwanda

SOS Children’s Villages, Rwanda

Equipment: 100 computer assets and one multifunctional printer

Close the Gap sent 100 computer assets and one multifunctional printer to the technical school of SOS Children’s Villages in Kigali, Rwanda. SOS Children’s Villages is active in 133 countries and territories. They help children in need to shape their own futures and share in the development of their communities. Close the Gap’s computers were installed in the SOS Children’s Village located in Kacyiru, close to the Kigali city centre. This children’s village has a school that welcomes 214 youngsters from difficult socio-economic backgrounds. It offers three years of vocational training in informatics, electricity, carpentry and accountancy to young people between the ages of 17 and 21.



SOS Children’s Villages, Rwanda

Computers for the Technical University of Mombasa, Kenya Equipment: 470 computer assets

In September 2012 the Technical University of Mombasa inaugurated its new computer lab with 470 computer assets that will allow hundreds of students to gain access to information and research. The University consists of the faculties of Engineering and Technology, Applied and Health Sciences, and Business and Social Studies. There are also two directorates: the Directorate of Information Technology Communication Services and the Directorate of Research.



Technical University of Mombasa

PROJECT ADOPTIONS

Below is an overview of a selection of projects that received financial support from Close the Gap’s strategic partners for the costs related to the refurbishing and transportation of computers.

1 Close the Gap and Ricoh join forces for a better future for orphaned children, South Africa

Equipment: 20 computer assets
Adopting partner: Ricoh and DHL



SOSA Foundation (Support Orphans in Southern Africa) focuses on orphaned children in South Africa who have been directly or indirectly affected by the HIV/AIDS virus. With limited resources and responding to local and often simple needs, SOSA wants to offer children a more secure future. Thanks to a corporate fund-raising activity organised by Ricoh, Close the Gap facilitated the donation of computers for two orphanages in South Africa. Instead of giving money, SOSA offers immediate assistance in terms of food, health care, education and demand-driven assistance such as psychiatric consultations. SOSA is an initiative of JP Skinner, a Ricoh employee, and his wife. JP is originally from South Africa but now lives and works in the Netherlands.



SOSA Foundation, South Africa

2 Computers for Congolese schools thanks to Air France Foundation, Democratic Republic of the Congo

Equipment: 300 computer assets
Service partner: Benelux Afro Centre (BAC)
Adopting partner: Air France Foundation



The Air France Foundation is the proud adopter of a project for implementing 300 computer assets in 10 secondary schools in the Kinshasa area. The computers are installed by Close the Gap’s service partner BAC. IT equipment is much needed in schools in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Close the Gap is pleased to collaborate with these partners for the swift and smooth implementation of the project.



Project adopted by Air France Foundation, D.R.C.



“We have computers but they are so outdated that we really struggle. So if the kids need to print for school, it gets tricky because they don’t have USB ports and they don’t have CD writing software. Thanks a lot for the computers for the orphanage!”

"As you might expect, this project has generated much interest in the world of education in the DRC. As the need is enormous we received requests from Kinshasa and from the provinces. Our challenge now is to find other sponsors, new donors to finance the acquisition of more equipment in order to give the same chance to everyone. If you do it by yourself, the process is slow and difficult. But all together, we can get there faster."

—
Dr. Ndudi Phasi
President BAC

First Rabobank computers installed in Tanzanian schools.

Equipment: 200 computer assets

Service partner: Affordable Computers and Technology for Tanzania (ACTT)

Adopting partner: Rabobank



Rabobank

In 2012 more than 200 computer assets were installed in four schools in Tanzania having a total of 2,000 students. The 900 students of the Hady School in Arusha were the lucky recipients of the first donation. In Tanzania, Close the Gap works with its local partner ACTT, which takes care of the distribution, installation and maintenance of the donated equipment. Additionally, for each 'new' computer delivered, an old computer is collected locally and recycled by Close the Gap's recycling partner WorldLoop.



Arusha Hady School, Tanzania

ICT4Education in East Africa, Rwanda and Tanzania

Equipment: 220 computer assets

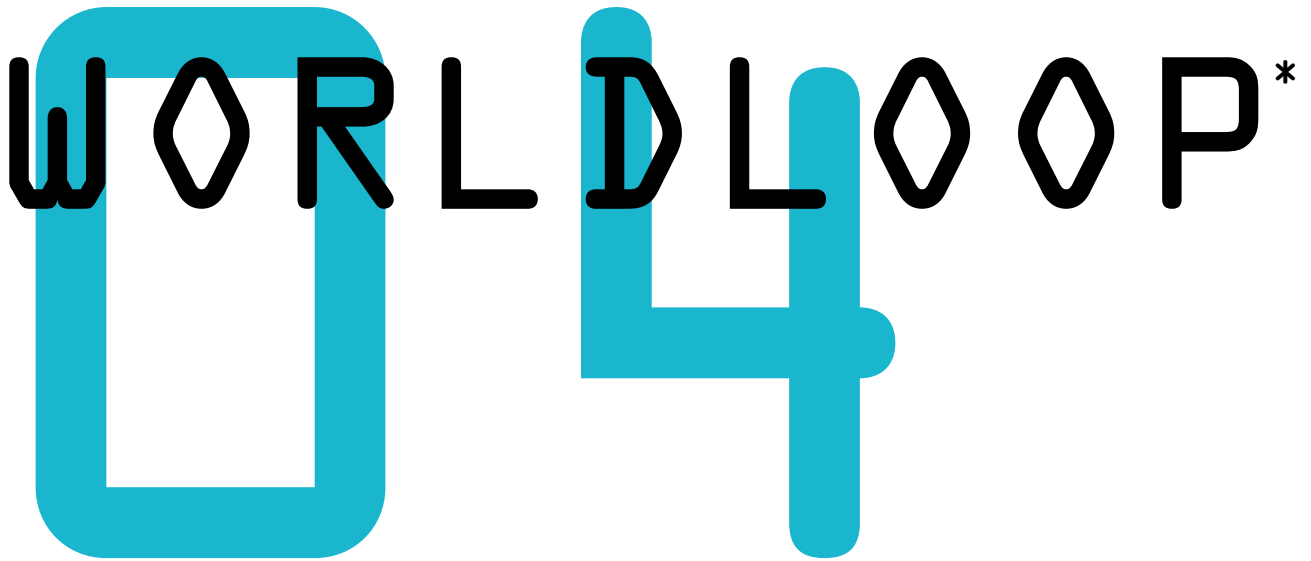
Service partner: ICT4ALL (Rwanda) and ACTT (Tanzania)

Adopting partner: Stichting Gillès

At the end of 2011, Stichting Gillès decided to adopt projects in Rwanda and Tanzania to support new partnerships with service partners in both countries. The main goal is to enhance education in the East African Community by providing 220 computer assets and ICT training to schools in collaboration with local service partners ICT4ALL and ACTT. Stichting Gillès also wanted to contribute to the development of environmentally sound e-waste management solutions in the countries involved in collaborations with WordLoop.



School in Tanzania



CREATING AN INTEGRATED E-WASTE SOLUTION

Once equipment reaches the end of its productive life in the developing countries, it is important to organise recycling and safe disposal of the equipment. Environmentally sound management of e-waste is a complex process and requires specialised equipment and expertise. The take-back systems and specialised processing infrastructure necessary are currently almost non-existent in developing countries and when e-waste enters the standard waste stream, or is broken down in the wrong conditions, it can cause serious health problems as well as severe environmental damage.



ABOUT E-WASTE

Any product or by-product that requires a voltage to operate and has reached its end of life or productive use can be considered as e-waste. This can include personal electronics such as computers, mobile phones, hairdryers, radios, water kettles, as well as larger white goods (refrigerators, washer/dryers, etc.). By-products include batteries, cables, SIM cards, etc. Most e-waste contains hazardous chemicals and materials, including lead, mercury and cadmium.

The e-waste challenge, both from local consumption as well as illegal dumping, is

exacerbated in developing countries due to the lack of enforcement and regulatory resources available on an international level. The problem is also made worse by the limited availability of legislation, specialised infrastructure and expertise necessary to handle e-waste properly in developing countries to reduce the threat to the environment and people's health. E-waste can be severely damaging to entire communities by increasing air and water pollution, which may lead to poisoning, miscarriage, mental handicap and even death.



E-WASTE IN DEVELOPING COUNTRIES

Because the demand for electrical and electronic appliances in developing countries is growing exponentially, e-waste is growing proportionally too. According to a recent UNEP report¹⁰, the amount of e-waste being produced in some of these countries – including from mobile phones and computers – could rise by as much as 500% over the next decade.

Kenya, Tanzania and Uganda had over 10 million mobile phone subscribers in 2010. And this number is increasing every year. As new ICT end-users become connected, ICT hardware consumption will increase, and as these products become obsolete, the volume of e-waste will also increase. Today, Kenya generates an average of 3,000 tonnes of e-waste each year from computers, monitors, printers, mobile phones, fridges, batteries, etc.

Additionally, developing countries are still the primary recipient of illegally exported e-waste coming from the developed world. Although these activities have been banned under the United Nations Basel Convention and written into legislation in the EU and OECD since the early 1990s, e-waste continues to be exported from areas such as North America, Europe and Australia. A 2002 study completed

Table 1¹¹. ICT use in EAC year 2010 and 2003

COUNTRY	ESTIMATED INTERNET USERS %		MOBILE PHONE USERS %		PERSONAL COMPUTERS %	
	2010	2003	2010	2003	2010	2003
Uganda	7.90	0.2518	27.02	1.59	1.69	0.29
Kenya	8.67	1.5978	41.88	4.15	1.37	0.56
Tanzania	1.22	0.2977	30.62	1.27	0.91	0.36
Rwanda	3.09	0.2516	13.61	1.1	0.30	0
Burundi	0.81	0.0875	5.95	0.45	0.85	0

by the Basel Action Network (BAN), a watchdog organisation based in the United States, reported that 80% of e-waste that was being sent to local recyclers was not processed domestically but diverted offshore. This translates into 10.2 million units per year. BAN reported that in 2003, 160,000 tonnes of e-waste was exported from the United Kingdom.

Despite difficulties in obtaining data on new and used Electrical and Electronic Equipment (EEE), as statistical data does not distinguish between these two categories of products, the studies in Ghana, for example, revealed that in 2009 around 70% of all imports were used EEE. 30% of the used EEE imported was determined to be non-functioning (hence should have been defined as e-waste): half of this amount was repaired locally and sold to consumers and the other half was not repairable. It is unclear how much of the remaining imported used EEE functioned for a reasonable time after it was sold. This so-called ‘near-end-of-life’ equipment, imported into West African countries as equipment but functioning for a relatively short time, can be another major source of e-waste.



¹⁰ United Nations News Service (2010-02-22). "As e-waste mountains soar, UN urges smart technologies to protect health".
¹¹ United Nations-DPI/NMD - UN News Service Section. Asiimwe, E.N. (n.d.) E-waste Management in East African Community. Page 5. Figures in table are converted to percentages.

However, it is assumed that in 2010 in five selected West African countries (Ghana, Ivory Coast, Benin, Liberia and Nigeria) between 50% and 85% of e-waste was domestically generated out of the consumption of new or used EEE of good quality with a reasonable life-span. For the West African countries this means between 650,000 and 1,000,000 tonnes of domestic e-waste generated per annum, which needs to be managed.

Table 2¹². Quantitative data for EEE in Benin, Côte d'Ivoire, Ghana, Liberia and Nigeria related to EEE imports, use and e-waste generated

COUNTRY	YEAR	IMPORTS OF EEE		EEE IN USE		E-WASTE GENERATED	
		TONNES/YEAR	TONNES/YEAR	TONNES	KG/INHABITANT	TONNES/YEAR	THEREOF COLLECTED
Benin	2009	16,000	16,000	55,000	6.32	9,700	N/A
Côte d'Ivoire	2009	25,000	25,000	100,000	4.8	15,000	N/A
Ghana	2009	215,000	215,000	984,000	41	179,000	172,000
Liberia	2009	3,500	3,500	17,000	4.6	N/A	N/A
Nigeria	2010	1,200,000	1,200,000	6,800,000	44	1,100,000	N/A

E-WASTE AS A RESOURCE

Although e-waste contains toxic elements that can be extremely damaging to individual health and the environment, e-waste also contains materials that have economic value when extracted. Thus e-waste can have a positive impact on a community by stimulating an economy around the recycling of e-waste in an environmentally correct manner, so creating jobs and economic returns. When

the hazardous components are processed properly, the amount and quality of valuable fractions recovered increases, so improving their resale value. This is why environmentally sound dismantling and recycling processes are key.

In order to tackle the problem of e-waste in developing and emerging countries, in 2009 Close the Gap created WorldPC,

now WorldLoop¹³. WorldLoop helps local communities establish an efficient, operational and self-funded system for e-waste collection and recycling.

¹² Source: Basel Convention (2011). Where are WEEE in Africa. Page 12. The data presented is based on the e-waste country assessment reports of the respective countries: Benin (CSEE et al. 2011), Côte d'Ivoire (CECAF et al. 2011), Ghana (Green Advocacy et al. 2011), Liberia (N.C. Sanitor's & Strother et al. 2011), Nigeria (BCCC-Nigeria et al. 2011)

¹³ WorldLoop, a brand name of WorldPC vzw/asbl, is a spin-off organisation created by Close the Gap Int. vzw in 2009 to take care of e-waste from end-of-life hardware in developing countries.



ABOUT WORLDLOOP

HISTORY

2008

Close the Gap introduced the concept of creating a public-private partnership to facilitate the creation of an environmentally sound e-waste management system in the East African Community after identifying a need for accessible environmentally safe recycling processes for e-waste in the developing countries. From this idea WorldPC vzw/asbl was born. A feasibility study, conducted by Close the Gap in a consortium with two external consultants, formed the basis of the future blueprint for WorldPC. This feasibility study was funded on a 50/50 basis by the Belgian Technical Cooperation (BTC-CTB) and Close the Gap.



Based on the outcome of the above-mentioned feasibility study and thanks to the support of early believers, sponsors and strategic partners, Close the Gap set up a pilot project.

In September 2011 Close the Gap inaugurated the WEEE Centre, WorldPC's first facility for recycling e-waste in Nairobi (Kenya). A high-level delegation of European Union representatives led by European Commission Vice-President Neelie Kroes, corporate supporters, Close the Gap and strategic partners attended the special event.



Ms. Neelie Kroes inaugurates the WEEE Centre

The WorldPC pilot project was financed through a mechanism of e-Resource Certificates that were voluntarily purchased by sponsors in Europe. With the support of the certificates, over 2,500 computer assets were collected and recycled in Kenya during the pilot project. The hazardous fractions of the computers which could not be recycled locally were shipped back to Europe, ensuring a closed loop recycling system for all e-waste components.



WEEE Centre

2012

New partnership

Recupel, the organisation for the collection and recycling of WEEE in Belgium, had been involved in challenging the business plan of WorldPC and acted as a knowledge partner for Close the Gap and WorldPC.

After a fruitful and constructive initial collaboration, Recupel and Close the Gap were ready to take the partnership to the next level. On 21 September 2011 the Board of Directors of Recupel decided to formalise the collaboration with WorldPC. In the coming years, Recupel will actively support WorldPC by providing significant funds for its operational plan to achieve self-sustainability within three to five years.



Ms. Neelie Kroes, Mr. Peter Sabbe and Mr. Olivier Vanden Eynde

The invaluable support of sponsors and partners helped WorldPC to be launched with the new brand name WorldLoop. It was also given a dedicated management team, which leveraged the momentum created by Close the Gap to expand its collection scope, geographical reach and promote the importance of environmentally sound e-waste management in developing countries. On 24 September 2012 WorldPC announced the rebranding to WorldLoop in the presence of Archbishop Desmond Tutu and Prince Carlos de Bourbon de Parme. This new name represents the mission of recycling all ICT equipment (and not only PCs) through a closed loop solution.



Prince Carlos de Bourbon de Parme, Archbishop Desmond Tutu and Mr. Olivier Vanden Eynde

“I love the idea that you have responsible use, reuse and then recycling. That is the first step in getting away from our linear way of thinking in society and back to a circular way of thinking, which is the most natural way for creating a sustainable society.”

— Prince Carlos de Bourbon de Parme

2012

“As we know, reuse of well performing appliances is a better option than recycling. However we have to prevent export for reuse as a cover for illegal export of e-waste. Therefore, it is very important to collaborate with well organised and responsible organisations such as Close the Gap.”

— Mr. Jan Vlak
Managing Director Wecycle

Today, WorldLoop is an advocacy organisation raising awareness and funds to create a recycling infrastructure in the East African region in which Close the Gap operates. WorldLoop uses the funds raised to support local entrepreneurs in Africa and to set up e-waste recycling centres aligned to internationally recognised recycling standards to ensure the environmentally sound end-of-life handling of electronic waste.

Wecycle

During the inauguration ceremony of the rebranding of WorldLoop, Mr. Jan Vlak, Director Wecycle the Netherlands, expressed his appreciation of the sustainable approach WorldLoop is bringing to ICT4Dev work, in particular in relation to computers donated in the Netherlands for new destinations in developing countries.



Mr. Jan Vlak, Director Wecycle



GOVERNANCE

The Board of Directors¹⁴ advises on the management and strategic development of the organisation and currently consists of four members with specific expertise in WorldLoop's focus areas.

Prof. em. Dr. Wim A.G. Blonk

Chairman of the Board

Drs. Hennie Wesseling

Board Member

Mr. Olivier Vanden Eynde

Founder and Managing Director

Close the Gap Int. vzw/asbl

Represented by Prof. em. Dr. Wim A.G. Blonk

OBJECTIVES OF WORLDLOOP

1 Awareness creation:

To create awareness, drive action and engage in knowledge sharing with regard to e-waste in developing countries;



2 Set up facilities:

To facilitate the creation of an operational and economically viable network of collection points, dismantling and recycling facilities to process e-waste in a safe and environmentally sound way;



3 Quality assurance:

To act as a quality label for actors involved in e-waste management, guaranteeing 100% sustainable end-of-life treatment for e-waste;



4 Engage collaboration:

To engage in fundraising to help e-waste management initiatives in developing countries become self-sustaining.



KEY FACTS AND FIGURES 2012

11,286

COMPUTER ASSETS COLLECTED AND RECYCLED IN KENYA (+/- 150 TONNES)

12

TONNES OF PRINTED CIRCUIT BOARD SHIPPED BACK TO EUROPE FOR TREATMENT AT A PRECIOUS METAL REFINER (UMICORE)

10,276

E-RESOURCE CERTIFICATES SOLD

PARTICIPATED IN

17

INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCES AND LECTURES ON E-WASTE MANAGEMENT

2

START-UP OF NEW PILOT PROJECTS IN RWANDA AND TANZANIA

4

ASSOCIATED PROJECTS IN EVALUATION PHASE TO BECOME MEMBERS IN 2013

¹⁴ The legal entity is for the time being WorldPC vzw/asbl – all governance around WorldLoop is managed by the Board of Directors, Management and General Assembly of WorldPC vzw/asbl

OPERATIONAL MODEL

WorldLoop does not manage any recycling operations itself, but acts as a catalyst, linking together actors involved in e-waste collection, dismantling, recycling, disposal, transport and logistics, providing support and monitoring for local e-waste recycling operations.

Operational Model



The WorldLoop model strives for maximum empowerment of local organisations and supports those involved in e-waste collection, dismantling and recycling by providing the following services:

Financial support

WorldLoop provides seed funding to collection, dismantling & recycling facilities, allowing these facilities to start up, invest in infrastructure and become self-sustaining. Financial support from WorldLoop is time-limited and has a co-funding requirement.

Technical assistance

WorldLoop supports member facilities by providing business plan support, training, advice on quality assurance, workers safety and recycling standards implementation, and by sharing knowledge & expertise.

International disposal of hazardous fractions

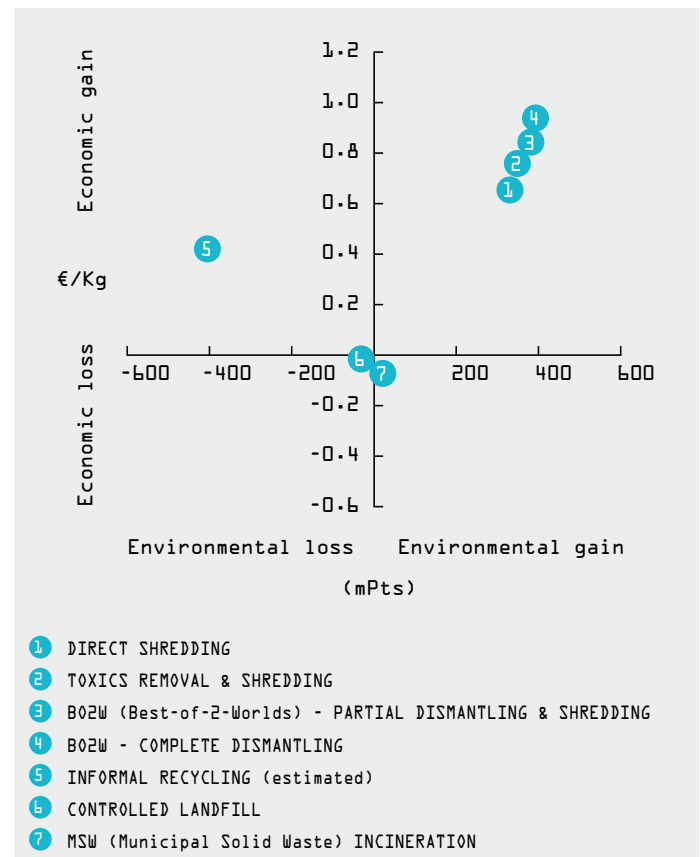
Through strategic partnerships with best in class recyclers in Europe, WorldLoop is able to provide member facilities with a recycling and disposal solution for complex and hazardous fractions that cannot be processed locally in a safe and environmentally sound way.

The nature of the collaboration between WorldLoop and member organizations differs case by case depending on the project needs and the outcome of a project screening process.

The WorldLoop operational model is based on the **Best-of-2-Worlds**¹⁵ approach, combining local collection and dismantling efforts in developing countries with best-in-class technologically advanced recycling solutions available in OECD countries, thus providing a win-win solution for the economy, environment and society and an alternative to primitive recycling practices.

Much has been researched on the potential benefits of a Best-of-2-Worlds approach to support developing and emerging countries addressing their e-waste, elevating e-waste recycling from primitive practices to a formal solution in these regions. In 2010 StEP conducted an extensive research project to validate the approach and found that through increasing proper manual dismantling in the pre-processing stages and adopting state-of-the-art technology for the complex fractions, the environmental impact of recycling is reduced while economic gains increase.

Table 3¹⁶.



¹⁵ Best-of-2-Worlds is a concept developed by the multi-stakeholder Solving the E-waste Problem (StEP) Initiative hosted by the UN's research arm, the United Nations University (UNU) which provides a network and pragmatic solution for e-waste treatment in emerging economies. It seeks technical and logistic integration of 'best' pre-processing in developing countries to manually dismantle e-waste and 'best' end-processing to treat hazardous and complex fractions in international state-of-the-art end-processing facilities.

¹⁶ Wang, F., et al. The Best-of-2-Worlds philosophy: Developing local dismantling and global infrastructure network for sustainable e-waste treatment in emerging economies. Waste Management (2012).

Through the network of partners and sponsors, WorldLoop has been able to move beyond discussion to action. Through professional mindshare, training and financial support, member organisations in Africa are able to increase the quantity and quality of resources extracted, so participating in a sustainable e-waste management system and a closed loop solution for the hazardous fractions that are sent to Europe for treatment.

The operational network consists of organisations involved in:

Collection:

Being able to recycle large volumes of e-waste requires an extensive network of organisations involved in the collection of end-of-life electronics. Collection is considered the biggest challenge to solving the e-waste problem in developing countries, as the infrastructure for collection is generally unavailable in most countries.

Manual dismantling:

After end-of-life electronics have been collected, they are manually dismantled with the non-hazardous fractions such as iron, steel, copper and aluminium separated from the hazardous components. Non-hazardous components can be resold on the local market to be reintroduced into local production processes.

Automated processing:

After manual dismantling, certain e-waste components need to be processed using specialised equipment or machinery to ensure environmentally sound recycling (e.g. cathode ray tubes, wires) or to reduce their volume (e.g. by removing plastic casings from cables).

International recycling and disposal:

Some e-waste components are hazardous (containing toxic substances) or highly complex. These components require specialised treatment that is currently only available in some OECD countries. Using the best-in-class, technologically highly advanced recycling techniques ensures recycling that is environmentally sound and also allows the extraction of the maximum value from the components. Examples of e-waste fractions that require recycling and disposal in OECD countries are printed circuit boards, lead-containing glass, transformers, mixed scrap and device-specific components containing toxic substances.

“WorldLoop generates local value from the collection and pre-processing of end-of-life electronics”

—
Mr. Thomas Leysen
Chairman KBC Group and Umicore

“What we have to imagine is a system that combines the best approaches of the entrepreneurship in developing countries with the technology that we have in our countries. Systems like Close the Gap foster partnerships to reuse electronics for educational and development purposes. Within this system, WorldLoop generates local value from the collection and pre-processing of end-of-life electronics and uses the best available recycling technologies like those we have here at Umicore in Hoboken, Belgium.”



CURRENT PROJECTS

A WorldLoop member is an individual or organisation that participates in the WorldLoop network and receives financial and consulting support from WorldLoop in exchange for transparency and compliance to WorldLoop standards.



WEEE Centre, Kenya

The WEEE Centre is at the forefront of managing e-waste and raising awareness of its work among the Kenyan population. There is a general lack of awareness of e-waste issues and the WEEE Centre takes every opportunity to inform the public about e-waste and how they can participate in the WEEE Centre's cause. The WEEE Centre was formally inaugurated on 27 September 2011 in the presence of the Vice-President of the European Commission Neelie Kroes. The WEEE Centre was created as a joint project by Close the Gap, WorldLoop, Computers for Schools Kenya and Digital Pipeline Africa. WorldLoop was involved in developing the business plan, providing seed capital and setting up the facility. Today, WorldLoop is involved with the WEEE Centre by monitoring operations, providing expertise and operational support and managing the recycling and disposal of hazardous fractions.



Great Lakes Electronics Management, Rwanda

Great Lakes Electronics Management Ltd (GLEM) was incorporated in January 2012. The company was set up to solve the growing e-waste problem in Rwanda with enthusiasm and conviction. WorldLoop supported the start-up of the company with the development of a business plan, and has provided training on e-waste recycling, offered ad hoc expertise and operational support and supplied pilot project seed funding for the collection of the first 1,000 PCs.



Viafrica, Tanzania

Viafrica is a well-established ICT4Dev social business that has been providing hardware and software solutions, training and support in Africa since 2003. WorldLoop is supporting Viafrica to include e-waste collection as a service for local communities at their centre in Moshi, Tanzania. Viafrica has already collected over 400 computers from local schools and started running awareness-raising campaigns with businesses.



E-RESOURCE CERTIFICATE PROGRAMME

WorldLoop empowers corporations to have a direct positive impact on the environment and stimulate local economies in developing countries by reducing the negative impact of e-waste. Financial contributions help WorldLoop to:

1. Provide seed capital to local entrepreneurs in developing countries starting up e-waste collection and dismantling activities;
2. Contribute to the operational costs of local WorldLoop members from the start-up phase until the member reaches the point of financial self-sufficiency;
3. Drive challenging methods of e-waste collection;
4. Ensure a high-quality standard of operation in terms of proper training, environmental compliance and transparent financial management. By combining local collection and dismantling efforts in developing countries with international disposal in best-in-class recycling facilities in Europe for complex and hazardous fractions, the certificates enable a Best-of-2-Worlds solution and ensure 100% environmentally sound recycling;
5. Drive international awareness-raising campaigns.

WorldLoop exercises a **like-for-like philosophy** through the sale of their e-Resource Certificates. The certificate represents an investment in the creation of an e-waste recycling infrastructure in the developing world to ensure that the entire end-of-life supply chain is supported.

As a market-driven fundraising mechanism, the certificates enable:

1. Consumers of first life ICT equipment to neutralise their e-waste footprint by supporting the environmentally sound recycling of ICT equipment in developing countries;
2. ICT projects in developing countries to ensure that the hardware that is imported is neutralised through an environmentally sound recycling channel.

So one complete computer, from the valuable fractions to the hazardous material, is collected and recycled in an environmentally sound manner.

This means:

- 20 kg of waste does not end up in landfills
- 10 kg of metal and 2 kg of plastics can be resold on local second-hand markets, so driving resource conservation and stimulating the local economy, including by creating new jobs in the recycling sector
- 8 kg of complex and hazardous fractions are transported to Europe to be recycled in an environmentally sound way there.

For each e-Resource Certificate issued, the customer receives an overview of the environmental impact guaranteed by WorldLoop, and the methods used in collection and recycling.

The following companies have supported WorldLoop through the purchase of e-Resource Certificates: 2E2, Belgian Development Agency (BTC/CTB), Air France Foundation, Antwerp World Diamond Centre, Carolus Management, CharITy Foundation, Deloitte SE, DNS Belgium, DSM, Eksbit, Essent, Exact, Stichting Gillès, ICT Media BV, KLM/Air France Group, Mr. Piet Mosch (former CIO of De Nederlandsche Bank), PGGM, Provimi and Rabobank.

Your organisation can partner with WorldLoop to change the e-waste cycle by offsetting your IT footprint through the purchase of e-Resource Certificates, becoming a strategic partner and spreading the word. To learn more, visit www.worldloop.org



WORLDLOOP'S STRATEGIC PARTNERS

WorldLoop's strategic partners are organisations that contribute to WorldLoop's mission by offering financial and in-kind support that is closely aligned with their organisation's core business.



AIR is a Brussels-based creative and branding consulting firm that offers end-to-end support for clients' creative needs. AIR provides WorldLoop with creative and strategic in-kind support of communication activities. It managed all the activities for rebranding WorldPC as WorldLoop. AIR also takes care of WorldLoop's communication tools and the creation of awareness-raising campaigns.



Coolrec is a leading European recycling company that is part of the Van Gansewinkel Group, which gives waste a second life in the form of raw materials. Coolrec specialises in recycling metal/plastic combinations such as from electrical appliances and ICT. Coolrec provides recycling and disposal services to WorldLoop, allowing environmentally sound and closed loop recycling of WorldLoop operations. Coolrec supports WorldLoop by providing technical expertise and other in-kind support.



Recupel organises the collection and processing of WEEE for Belgium, in accordance with the "take-back obligation" laid down by the European Commission. Recupel supported the WorldPC Project by offering strategic advice and expertise in the set-up of the business model. In 2012 Recupel also committed to provide seed funding for the operational costs of WorldLoop, allowing WorldLoop to kick off as an independent organisation.

"By supporting WorldLoop, we want to "walk the talk" and prove that setting up a proper recycling system in these countries is feasible and the best solution for turning this problem into an opportunity."

—
Mr. Peter Sabbe
CEO Recupel

"Operating as the Belgian e-waste collection scheme, we are often confronted with questions about the unhealthy and environmentally unfriendly recycling of e-waste in African countries. By supporting WorldLoop, we want to "walk the talk" and prove that setting up a proper recycling system in these countries is feasible and the best solution for turning this problem into an opportunity. A tangible start was made end of 2011 with the first recycling centre in Kenya and now WorldLoop is growing into a great network of recycling centres covering the African continent and beyond. The successful operations of WorldLoop are creating a "license to operate" for organisations such as Close the Gap and others, making a real difference to so many people in developing countries. ICT for Development as a leverage for change, from education, microfinance and entrepreneurship to healthcare and good governance, that's what it's all about! We want to make the world a better place for the many people living in disadvantaged environments."





Umicore is a global materials technology group. It focuses on application areas where its expertise in materials science, chemistry and metallurgy makes a real difference. Umicore processed the first container of mother boards from the computers processed in the pilot project in Kenya. Through its support, Umicore allowed the WorldPC Project to ensure a closed loop and proper recycling of all e-waste components.



The **WEEE Forum** is a European association of 41 electrical and electronic waste producer compliance schemes. Its mission is to provide a platform for co-operation and exchange of best practices, and so optimise the effectiveness of the operations of the member organisations, while striving for excellence and continuous improvement in environmental performance. The WEEE Forum seeks to be a centre of competence that allows members to make constructive contributions to the general debate on e-waste policy matters.

“The collaboration of Umicore with WorldLoop fits in perfectly with our sustainability vision. We bring an answer to the scarcity of raw materials, through the recycling of end-of-life electronics, whilst WorldLoop helps local communities to establish an efficient, operational and self-funded system for e-waste collection in developing countries. We are proud that besides helping our local community, we can also contribute to a better life for communities further abroad.”

—
Mr. Koen Demesmaeker

Senior Vice-President Precious Metals Refining - Recycling

THE FOLLOWING ORGANISATIONS ARE STRATEGIC PARTNERS OF WORLDLOOP AS WELL AS CLOSE THE GAP.



WORLDLOOP'S ROAD AHEAD

The balance between the benefits that ICT brings to societies across the globe and the end-of-life management of hardware is still a challenge that requires strong international collaboration. The number of people who are passionate and engaged in this discussion, from manufacturers and international recyclers, corporations and small businesses, governments and civil society, is a sign of the importance and possibilities of finding lasting solutions.

It is inspiring to see how far Close the Gap's e-waste recycling project has gone, from an idea to a true zero-waste-to-landfill solution that provides Close the Gap with a continued licence to operate. Through the strong relationship with Close the Gap, the beneficiaries and WorldLoop, ICT4Dev can continue to bring positive change to the communities that can benefit most, without harming those regions that are most at risk of e-waste exposure.

Today, WorldLoop is active in three countries in the East African Community. WorldLoop is committed to improving operations and assisting these areas in reaching internationally recognised recycling standards. Additionally, as an organisation committed to reducing environmental impact, WorldLoop is undertaking a CO2 assessment of its operational model. Based on these results, WorldLoop, with the help of international partners, will be able to find even more ways of improving practices while reducing the environmental impact.

In the coming years, WorldLoop looks to continue engaging with local entrepreneurs in other African regions and around the world to achieve its vision of a world without e-waste. WorldLoop's focus is on West Africa and the Southern Africa region to establish the infrastructure and network of collection, sorting, dismantling and pre-processing according to the high standards of recycling found internationally. WorldLoop's experience will be shared with others, as the organisation hopes to come up with sustainable solutions that will ultimately make its existence unnecessary.

Through the hard work and dedication of our supporters and partnerships in Africa, we have started on the road to transforming e-waste from an environmental and social problem in developing countries to an economic and environmental benefit.



PROJECTS IN EUROPE

Running parallel to its projects in developing and emerging countries, Close the Gap supports several projects in Europe which aim to enhance employability and empower the most vulnerable people.



PC SOLIDARITY



Launched in 2009 with the support of DNS Belgium, PC Solidarity is Close the Gap's project for countering the digital divide in Belgium. Various Belgian studies and data collected by the Directorate-General Statistics and Economic Information show that the digital divide is closely linked to employment, education and age of the (potential) user.

The aim of Close the Gap is to reach out to organisations that help disadvantaged people to improve their skills in order to enhance their chances on the labour market. PC Solidarity wants to strengthen the ICT capacities of these organisations, both on an infrastructural and a pedagogic level.

As a result of the fifth call for proposals launched at the end of 2011, a total of 1,002 computer assets were distributed to 45 organisations throughout Belgium in 2012. In addition to hardware, the organisations received a printer, access to preferential software solutions, train-the-trainer courses and a financial contribution for ICT-related services and equipment. The projects proposed for the call in 2012 will be selected in 2013.

“As an organisation active in socio-cultural work it is not easy to provide sufficient PC classes for our participants. Thanks to PC Solidarity we are able to provide good computers for this vulnerable group. Otherwise, we wouldn't be able to use the Internet, e-mail and word processing programs in our training. This way, we can continue to narrow the digital gap.”

—
Mr. Hendrik De Luca
Coordinator sector training & education Groep INTRO Ghent

PROJECT EXAMPLES

Expansion PC - classes for job seekers and newcomers**Organisation: Groep INTRO****Equipment: 44 computer assets**

Groep INTRO is a non-profit organisation that provides job coaching for job seekers from part-time learning and work centres in Brussels and Flanders (Belgium). In 2012 they wished to extend their computer classes in order to integrate the use of the computers more regularly in their work-related training courses.



Groep Intro Ghent

Get to know your computer!**Organisation: Centre de Développement Rural - Han****Equipment: 20 computer assets**

The Centre de Développement Rural (Rural Development Centre) is a non-profit organisation which aims to promote social gatherings, communication and training to enhance rural development in the region of Han (Belgium), for instance through socio-professional integration activities. The centre serves twenty job seekers of all ages and nationalities, who are often vulnerable, unskilled or long-term unemployed. In 2012 the centre received 20 computer assets for its training activities.



Centre de Développement Rural, Han

PROJECT PARTNERS



DNS Belgium is the driving force behind PC Solidarity. They have been involved from the very beginning, acting as the financial partner when the project was initiated in 2009. It is in DNS Belgium's 'DNA' to support social projects in Belgium as they have a very strong CSR policy. In 2012 DNS Belgium also organised the second edition of the 'Bike to Close the Gap' event, where they gathered the very best of the ICT world to cycle to benefit PC Solidarity. A more detailed account of DNS Belgium's involvement can be found in Chapter 6.



King Baudouin Foundation organises the PC Solidarity calls for proposals.



Microsoft provides software (Windows 7 and Office 2007 Basic) for the selected projects.



SOCIALware gives selected projects the opportunity to receive donations from Cisco (network applications), Symantec (antivirus) and Microsoft.



RICOH Belgium donates a printer to every selected project.



VDAB provides educational services and train-the-trainer courses.



Forem/Technofutur TIC provides educational services and train-the-trainer courses.

“People that cannot use computers miss a lot of opportunities on the labour market. Therefore, the VDAB wants to share its expertise with PC Solidarity by offering training in the transfer of ICT knowledge and free training materials on basic ICT. As a proud partner of PC Solidarity we hope that, together, we can tackle the challenge of bridging the digital divide!”

—
Mr. Fons Leroy
CEO VDAB

PC Solidarity helps to close the digital divide by providing not just the PCs that are needed by social and educational non-profit organisations, but also the related products and services without which PC training is unlikely to succeed.



OTHER EUROPEAN PROJECTS

Be.Face is a non-profit organisation that brings together companies and their communities to foster equal opportunities, diversity and social inclusion of vulnerable groups. Be.Face is primarily based on the involvement of member companies and partnerships with economic and institutional partners. In 2012 Close the Gap started a new collaboration by delivering computers to the projects supported.

Belgacom and its Foundation want to bridge the digital divide within non-profit organisations and schools and offer free Internet training at 13 points of sales. For all the projects, computers were delivered by Close the Gap.

Bednet and **Take Off** are the Flemish-speaking and French-speaking non-profit organisations respectively for children who suffer from long-term and chronic diseases. Their aim is to create a connection between the children and their own classroom through the Internet. This way, the sick children can follow as many courses as possible during their absence and stay in touch with their teachers and classmates. In 2012 Close the Gap donated computers to both organisations, partly via the Belgacom Foundation.

Close the Gap delivered computers to **Centra voor Basiseducatie**. These learning centres offer basic adult education in Flanders.

Network For Training Entrepreneurship (NFTE) organises project calls for part-time educational centres and organises e-learning courses for young people. Close the Gap delivered computers to these centres.

Since end 2012 Close the Gap started delivering computers to schools and non-profit organisations selected by the **Telenet Foundation**.



SUPPORT CLOSE THE GAP

HOW TO SUPPORT CLOSE THE GAP?

Close the Gap's success depends largely on the generosity of its computer donors and strategic partners. Close the Gap has two types of partnerships available. One becomes a 'Friend of' as soon as one donates ICT equipment to Close the Gap. If this same company or organisation wants to support Close the Gap financially, adopt a specific project, make an in-kind contribution or buy e-Resource Certificates from Close the Gap's partner organisation WorldLoop, this company or organisation becomes a 'strategic partner'.



MY COMPANY/ORGANISATION WANTS TO...

Donate computers

Close the Gap collects high-quality used IT equipment from European companies and organisations. The equipment is collected in a professional way and at no cost to the donor.

“In banks, data security is a big concern. We must be sure that confidential information is not disseminated by people using old computers in the wrong way. That’s why KBC has relied on its partner Close the Gap for seven years now to contribute to bridging the digital divide worldwide.”

—
Mr. Thomas Leysen
Chairman KBC Group and Umicore

Adopt a project

Does your company have some connection with a specific emerging or developing country? Would it like to support a project in a specific field? Close the Gap gives companies and foundations the opportunity to adopt a project. This way, companies help a project to cover the costs related to the refurbishment and transportation of computers.

Help financially

Close the Gap works without any subsidies, so we count on the generosity of private donors and foundations to help bridge the digital divide. Do what many other companies do and support Close the Gap through a financial donation.

“The success of this project lies in uniting our stakeholders around this cross-border humanitarian adventure!”

—
Mr. Enrique Calabuig
CEO Ricoh France

Contribute in-kind

Your company wants to help Close the Gap but you don’t know how? A lot of companies help by offering us their core business. Close the Gap is always looking for new partners that can assist the organisation in its daily work in terms of project and office management.

“At Emakina, we have a lot of talented workers, but they are also citizens. That’s why the Emakina Foundation exists, and why we collaborate with Close the Gap by building and updating their website. Giving a new life to IT material and opening up the IT world to thousands of people: it’s work that we consider important. Because its actions bridge the digital divide between the haves and have-nots, Emakina.BE is proud to be the digital partner of Close the Gap.”

—
Mr. Denis Steisel
CEO Emakina

“We believe in this strong initiative to take back computers from European companies to help the most vulnerable worldwide and, as a socially engaged company, Ricoh France wants to contribute to this project. Through our network, we are able to help Close the Gap to increase its awareness among French companies. We also support the organisation through a yearly financial donation that helps to cover some project costs. The success of this project lies in uniting our stakeholders around this cross-border humanitarian adventure!”



Help prevent e-waste in landfills in developing countries

Close the Gap created WorldLoop in order to set up an environmentally sound e-waste management system in developing countries. In 2011 WorldLoop set up its first recycling centre in Kenya, where Close the Gap's computers are recycled by local partners. This recycling facility is financed through a mechanism of e-Resource Certificates that are voluntarily purchased by sponsors in Europe. For each certificate bought by a European partner, one asset is collected and recycled in Africa.



Recycling Centre, Nairobi, Kenya

• **Logistics**

Close the Gap offers one single point of contact for the company's end-of-life ICT hardware.

• **Access and visibility in terms of a European B2B network**

Partners can benefit from Close the Gap's extended network at organised events, which may lead to interesting business opportunities.

• **Communication**

Close the Gap offers tools to engage your employees and stakeholders.

What's in it for your company?

Supporting Close the Gap benefits corporations as it creates win-win situations in terms of:

• **Transparent & reportable CSR activities**

Close the Gap manages the social projects you support from start to finish. Supporting Close the Gap contributes to the growth of the company on a social level (in terms of employee awareness and involvement and community investment) and on an economical level (in terms of Social Return on Investment).

“Essent IT wants to give its hardware a secure data wipe and a socially responsible second life. This is exactly what Close the Gap offers in a sustainable way! Besides the donation of high-quality ICT equipment, we go a step further by financially supporting educational projects in Uganda and South Africa.”

— Mr. Jano Masarovic

Information Manager Director Essent IT

From left to right:
Mr. Olivier Vanden Eynde, Archbishop em. Desmond Tutu, Prince Carlos de Bourbon de Parme,
Mr. Carol Dona (CEO Ricoh Netherlands), Ms. Nicolette Kraay (CSR Manager Ricoh Netherlands)





THANK YOU TO OUR 'FRIENDS OF'

ABN AMRO - Acerta - Adecco - Aegon -
Ahold - Air France - Amnesty International -
AXA - COA - Belden - Belga - bioMérieux - Bokiau
- Cargill - Case Logic - CCA International - Cegeka
- Ceran - Coca-Cola Entreprises - Coca-Cola Company
- Cofely - Cofinimmo - Conseil de l'Union Européenne
- DAF - Deloitte - The Walt Disney Company - Edelman -
Enexis - Essent - European Schoolnet - Exact - Fabricom
- Fokker Services BV - Gate Gourmet - Heerlen - GSI - GSK
Vaccines - Heineken France - Holland Venture (Voyage
et Culture) - Honda - Immobel - ING - Interwaas - ISB
- ISZF - Jumbo - KBC - King Baudouin Foundation - KLM -
Kluwer - Linea Raffaelli - Liberty Global - Manroland
- Médecins Sans Frontières - Mobistar - Nederlandse
Spoorwegen - NS Hispeed - NXP - OCE - OCMW Gent - OCMW
Leuven - ONAFTS/RKW - ONVA/RJV - ONVZ - Politie
Leuven - PostNL - ProRail - Provincie Vlaams-Brabant
- Provincie West-Vlaanderen - Rabobank - Robert Half
International - Rode Kruis - SAS - Schneider - SD
Worx - SiNSYS - Starwood Hotel & Resorts - St. Joseph
Krankenhaus - Stork Technical Services - Synergics
- Telenet - Thomson Reuters - Toyota - Triodos
- TUC RAIL - UCB - Uconnect - UGent -
UPC - UZ Antwerpen - UZ Leuven -
VUB - VWR - VTech - Weekbladers



 THANK YOU TO OUR STRATEGIC PARTNERS

CORPORATE PARTNERS



Acerta is a leading human resources services provider in Belgium that specialises in consultancy, and the digitisation and organisation of administrative processes for payroll, social security, child benefits and branch procedures. Acerta supports Close the Gap by offering social secretariat and payroll services and training.



Air France is the French flag carrier and one of the world's largest airlines. It serves 35 destinations in France and operates scheduled passenger and cargo services worldwide to 191 destinations. Air France supports Close the Gap through preferential prices for the transport of computers to their destination.

“The Air France foundation is proud to give logistical help to this talented social entrepreneurial organisation that is Close the Gap. Our partnership in helping vulnerable youngsters to use high-quality pre-owned computers in a proper and secure way is essential to us.”

—
Mr. Frédéric Verdier

General Manager Air France/KLM Belux



The **Air France Foundation** supports computer donations for educational projects in the Democratic Republic of the Congo.



KLM Royal Dutch Airlines is the flag carrier airline of the Netherlands. KLM operates scheduled passenger and cargo services worldwide to more than 90 destinations. KLM supports

Close the Gap by providing free cargo transport for donated computers to KLM destinations. In 2012 KLM executed 23 shipments for Close the Gap to destinations across the globe. The **KLM AirCares** programme supports Close the Gap by generating as much publicity as it can for the projects supported using in-flight promotional films, articles in KLM's magazines, by providing information on their corporate website and increasingly through social media. KLM also initiates special campaigns, takes part in fund-raising activities and offers logistical support.

Close the Gap has been selected as one of the preferred partners of **Air France/KLM** Belux. This allows Close the Gap to receive visibility in Air France/KLM Belux communication programmes, including the Flying Blue Partner programme.



Belgacom is the largest telecommunications company in Belgium. In 2012 Close the Gap delivered computers to non-profit organisations and schools selected by Belgacom and to Belgacom points of sale in order to organise Internet training.



Computer Task Group is an IT solutions company active in North America and Europe that specialises in services which improve the management and delivery of both business and IT projects. Computer Task Group manages all the network services of Close the Gap.

Deloitte.

The auditing and consulting firm **Deloitte** is an important and long-time loyal supporter of Close the Gap, helping to guarantee the transparent and professional use of funds raised through sponsors and donors.

Deloitte Belgium assists Close the Gap with external audits, tax advice, accountancy, legal services as well as business development. In 2012 Deloitte Belgium adopted an ICT project in Tanzania and a team of employees went on-site to give ICT training.

Deloitte Netherlands supports Close the Gap through its Deloitte Fair Chance Foundation. Furthermore, Deloitte Netherlands hosted Close the Gap's strategic partner day in 2012.

Deloitte Societas Europaea (SE) is a Deloitte cross-border European entity that enables the Deloitte companies in Belgium,



France, the Netherlands, Denmark, Germany, Central Europe and Luxembourg to collaborate on various issues, including corporate social responsibility. In 2012 Deloitte SE supported two universities in Western Uganda. The support goes further than providing access to ICT, as Deloitte will involve employees from its different companies to stimulate university students on an entrepreneurial level, based on Deloitte's core values.

“At Deloitte Belgium we find it important to make a distinctive impact through our corporate social responsibility projects.”

Mr. Rik Vanpeteghem
CEO Deloitte Belgium

“At Deloitte Belgium we find it important to make a distinctive impact through our corporate social responsibility projects. This is why we closely collaborate with strategic partners, such as Close the Gap, that share our corporate social responsibility goals of promoting education, innovation, entrepreneurship and respect for the environment.”



Deloitte Belgium team in Tanzania



DESIGN IS DEAD

Design is Dead is a cross-disciplinary creative agency of craftsmen with keyboards. Delivering solid strategies, out-of-the-box concepts and highly addictive visual eye candy is what they have been doing since 1998. “We don’t just execute your briefing. We blow your mind.” At the end of 2012, Design is Dead started a collaboration with Close the Gap to develop a new innovative and coherent communication strategy.



DHL commits its expertise in international express, air and ocean freight, road and rail transportation, contract logistics and international mail services to its customers. DHL accepts its corporate social responsibility by supporting climate protection, disaster management and education. In 2012 DHL put its knowledge at Close the Gap's disposal by offering training on customs formalities and by advising Close the Gap's partners abroad about the import process.



Emakina is a full service digital native agency. Every day new digital tools are opening up new ways of expression for brands. Native to this world of complexity, Emakina fuses imagination and innovation and orchestrates relevant points of convergence to build brand experiences that engage consumers... Emakina designed Close the Gap's website and updates it regularly. In 2012 Emakina created Close the Gap's end-of-year greetings.



Essent is the largest energy company in the Netherlands and also operates in Germany and Belgium. Essent wants to help resolve current and future societal issues. In 2012 Essent adopted ICT projects in South Africa and Uganda.



Flection, an **Arrow** company, is an international company specialised in reuse, data erasure, recycling and disposal of IT equipment. Flection offers its services to Close the Gap at competitive rates. Thanks to the collaboration with Flection, Close the Gap is able to pick up computer assets in almost all industrialised countries with a professional guarantee for the quality of the refurbishment process.



dns.be

DNS Belgium is a non-profit organisation founded by Agoria, BELTUG and ISPA, and its mission is to register .be domain names, make the Internet more accessible and encourage its use. This also means helping to close the digital divide among disadvantaged groups as well as stimulating the digital economy. DNS Belgium has been supporting Close the Gap financially since 2009. Overall, DNS Belgium has allocated a fund that would provide 20,000 computers over five years for educational projects in Belgium and in the East African Community.

“For four years now we have been partnering with Close the Gap and we look back on a very fruitful collaboration. We are still convinced that ICT support for social, medical and educational projects in developing and emerging countries is crucial for further economic and social development.”

Mr. Philip Du Bois
General Manager DNS Belgium

“For four years now we have been partnering with Close the Gap and we look back on a very fruitful collaboration. We are still convinced that ICT support for social, medical and educational projects in developing and emerging countries is crucial for further economic and social development. We are also staying very actively involved in the support of non-profit organisations in Belgium. These organisations have one common goal: to enhance employment amongst the most vulnerable people in society. In 2012 we enabled 45 Belgian organisations to receive 501 computers and we are aware that many more organisations need ICT equipment for their target groups. Since 2011 we have gone a step further in our collaboration by raising awareness about the digital divide in Belgium within other IT companies. That’s why we organise “Bike to Close the Gap”, a yearly cycling event for the benefit of PC Solidarity. For two years in a row now, the event has been a great success, generating a great sporting and networking atmosphere. In 2012 40 companies with 208 cyclists participated in the event. We hope to have even more companies in 2013 to be able to ensure our continued support to PC Solidarity and Close the Gap!”



Geodis is a global logistics provider and wholly owned subsidiary of the SNCF Group. The Group's ability to coordinate all or part of the logistics chain enables it to support its customers in their strategic, geographical and technological developments, providing them with solutions tailored to optimising their material and information flows. To support its eco-citizen approach, Geodis became a partner of Close the Gap in 2012. In addition to financial support, Geodis organises meetings with its customers and suppliers to promote the activities of Close the Gap, helping the organisation to develop its network around the world.

Grant Thornton

Grant Thornton (previously PKF Business Advisors) provides quality accounting and business advisory services. Grant Thornton has committed its expertise to ensure the transparency of Close the Gap's finances through its extensive annual internal auditing contribution.



ITpreneurs, the leading provider of competence development solutions for IT best practices, announced its charitable partnership with Close the Gap in 2012. Through this partnership, the organisation will collaborate to provide technology resources to developing countries. ITpreneurs also supported Close the Gap through a financial contribution.

“We are very pleased to partner with Close the Gap to further the organisation's mission. With our aligned goal of promoting training and education on a global level, I am confident this will be a mutually beneficial partnership.”

—
Sukhbir Jasuja
CEO ITpreneurs



KBC Bank & Insurance is a Belgian universal multi-channel bank that focuses on private clients and small- and medium-sized enterprises. KBC belongs to Close the Gap's largest donor organisations.

Leo Burnett

It is **Leo Burnett's** long-standing desire to use its passion, brains and creative talent to inspire communication solutions for those who are trying to address the most important social issues of our time. Leo Burnett provided communication services for Close the Gap.



Microsoft develops, manufactures, licenses and supports a wide range of products and services predominantly related to computing through its various product divisions. In 2012 Microsoft supported Close the Gap by providing software training and licences to Belgian non-profit organisations supported by PC Solidarity.



The way we do our work is changing, so **Out Of Office** has developed and implemented a new way of working for Close the Gap that stimulates interaction and collaboration, sharing information and knowledge, creativity and innovation. The new offices will be ready in 2013.



Ricoh, one of the world's leading manufacturers and suppliers of office automation equipment and document solutions, has been supporting Close the Gap from its creation with its core business, knowledge and products.

In 2012 **Ricoh Belgium** supplied printers to Belgian non-profit organisations that received a computer donation through PC Solidarity.

In addition to financial support, **Ricoh Netherlands** printed Close the Gap's annual report and other communication tools. Ricoh Netherlands also donates used printers that, after refurbishment, can be ordered by the projects.

Ricoh France is a strong asset for Close the Gap in its current work to establish relations with French donor companies.



Rabobank

Rabobank Group is an international financial services provider operating on the basis of cooperative principles. It offers retail banking, wholesale banking, asset management, leasing and real estate services. Rabobank wants to help young people in developing countries to obtain access to the digital world and simultaneously solve the e-waste problem. The Dutch Rabobank replaces about 15,000 ICT working places each year as a result of Life Cycle Management. That's why Rabobank has started a major three-year partnership with Close the Gap and aims to donate approximately 50,000 computers during this project period. Through a partnership with Dell, Rabobank offers one e-Resource Certificate for every computer donated.

This strategic cooperation with Close the Gap gives Rabobank the opportunity to combine PC donations with e-waste neutralisation.



Arusha Hady School, Tanzania

“We hope and expect that this initiative to combine PC donations with e-waste neutralisation in developing countries will be adopted by other donors and suppliers of electronic equipment.”

Mr. René Steenvoorden
CIO Rabobank Nederland

“We donate decommissioned computers to projects in developing countries for the purpose of helping young people in developing countries obtain access to the digital world community and thereby supporting them in their quest for a better future. We have chosen the cooperation with Close the Gap because they have a track record in PC donations and local support for users. The cooperation with Close the Gap gives us the best possible assurance that our decommissioned PCs are redeployed most effectively. And last but not least, our cooperation with Close the Gap gives us the opportunity to jointly take an important step forward in solving the e-waste problem in developing countries, to which our supplier Dell will contribute as well. We hope and expect that this initiative to combine PC donations with e-waste neutralisation in developing countries will be adopted by other donors and suppliers of electronic equipment.”



SAS Institute is the leader in business analytics software and services, and the largest independent vendor in the business intelligence market. SAS developed a tailor-made reporting tool for Close the Gap that allows the organisation to extract several reports.



Telenet Foundation supports social projects that promote digital inclusion. In 2012 Close the Gap delivered computers to projects which were selected through the Foundation. Moreover, Telenet hosts Close the Gap's e-mail.

VINTAGE PRODUCTIONS

Vintage is a pan-European communication agency. "One should not only focus on the differences between people but look for commonality and similarity." This quote, from Theodore Levitt, serves as the guiding principle of what Vintage stands for as a communication agency. In 2012 Vintage supported Close the Gap by maintaining the website of PC Solidarity.



The Flemish Interuniversity Council for University Development Cooperation (VLIR-UOS) supports research and higher education institutions in the South through partnerships with Flemish universities and higher education institutions. VLIR-UOS wants to improve the capacity of institutions in the South. Close the Gap supplies computers to VLIR-UOS' partner universities in developing countries and to social projects supported by the South-based educational institutions. VLIR-UOS guarantees sustainability by providing ICT maintenance and training for local staff.



The Vrije Universiteit Brussel (VUB) is Brussels' Flemish university and it welcomes more than 10,000 students every year. It is through the support and expertise of the VUB that Close the Gap was founded. The VUB provides Close the Gap with logistical assistance by offering office space. Additionally, the office costs of telecommunication, fax and postal services are partly sponsored by the VUB.

NETWORKS

Close the Gap is pleased to announce it participated in various networks in 2012. These networks offer knowledge and create opportunities for Close the Gap to grow in terms of visibility, contacts and computer donations.



CharITy, founded by ICT Media, aims to involve the Dutch IT community in CSR projects. Using the intrinsic value of networks, ideas, knowledge, expertise and partnerships, the foundation strives to contribute more than just what is offered by their own corporate (marketing communication) funds within existing CSR initiatives or projects. In 2009 a pledge was signed to deliver 40,000 computer assets by the end of 2012. In September 2012 CharITy adjusted this target to an ambitious 50,000 computers assets. The goal for the end of 2015 is to have the Dutch CIO community deliver a total of 100,000 computer assets!



Archbishop em. Desmond Tutu signs the CharITy pledge

CompTIA

CompTIA is a US-based non-profit trade association that advances the global interests of IT professionals and companies throughout the world. CompTIA focuses its programmes on four main areas: education, certification, advocacy and philanthropy. One of its member communities, EU IT Services and Support, supported Close the Gap in 2012 through a financial donation.



The Datacenter Group guarantees the safety, power supply and connectivity of companies' servers. They are specialised in the specific security of data centres. Since 2012 The Datacenter Group has been raising awareness of Close the Gap's activities within its network and giving clients the opportunity to support Close the Gap financially.

THE EXECUTIVES' CIRCLE

• MANAGEMENT & LEADERSHIP IN MOTION •

The Executives' Circle was founded with the purpose of gathering the foremost business leaders and intellectual elite within an exclusive forum that addresses today's key management, leadership and societal challenges. In 2012 the IT Executives' Circle, an exclusive think tank comprising Belgium's leading CIOs and senior IT managers, continued the CIO-PE (CIO for Hope) initiative launched in 2011. The Belgian companies collected 13,000 computer assets in one year, so exceeding the original goal of 10,000 computer assets by the end of 2012.

Furthermore, Close the Gap is an active member of the networks **KAURI** and **MVO Nederland**. Close the Gap is being supported by and is in contact with following ICT and corporate social responsibility networks: **Agoria ICT, ADM, BELTUG, Business and Society, CIO Europe, CSR Europe, Datanews, Educaid, Ethicom, FINAKI, Lion's Club, Rotary Clubs, PACE, StEP, TechSoup** and **TEDx**.

NON-PROFIT PARTNERS

Stichting Gillès was established in 1991 with private funds from the shareholders of Etap. The purpose of the foundation is to support small-scale economic initiatives that increase the autonomy of the local population. In 2012 Stichting Gillès collaborated with Close the Gap by supporting ICT4Education projects in Rwanda and Tanzania.



The **Jan van Ieperen Fonds** supports social and community activities financially as well as materially. The fund provides assistance to people and initiatives that help individuals and groups achieve a better living and/or work environment. In 2012 the Jan van Ieperen Fonds helped schoolchildren in Ghana receive access to ICT education.



Stichting Liberty supports social projects financially. With support of the Foundation, Close the Gap was able to set up a revolving fund to pre-finance computer deliveries to Close the Gap's service partners in the East African Community.

♥
SUPPORT CLOSE THE GAP



ACCOUNT- ABILITY

CLOSE THE GAP'S VALUES

Close the Gap's Board of Directors, management and employees deliver the organisation's five key mission values to counsellors, strategic partners, donors, supporting partners and contacts on a daily basis:

Comfort when dealing with the donation process in terms of logistics.

Safety when dealing with the erasing (data wiping) process.

Reliability thanks to Grant Thornton's external audit and Deloitte Belgium's internal audit.

Transparency when dealing with all partners.

Environmentally sound when promoting its 'zero e-waste' policy with local partners.

ACCOUNTABILITY

Board of Directors

Close the Gap is governed by an independent Board of Directors and their primary function is to give advice and make recommendations to the Managing Director about policies, strategies, allocation of resources and legislative arrangements. In addition, this board is responsible for giving its formal approval to major strategic and organisational decisions taken within Close the Gap.

Board of Recommendation

Close the Gap's Board of Recommendation consists of eminent people willing to vouch for and recommend Close the Gap within their networks. This board is essential to the organisation in terms of international support and visibility.

Remuneration Committee

The Remuneration Committee was established to ensure that remuneration arrangements support the strategic aims of the organisation and enable the recruitment, motivation and retention of our staff, while complying with the requirements of regulatory and governance bodies, and satisfying the expectations of stakeholders and remaining consistent with the expectations of the wider employee population.

The members of the Remuneration Committee are Prof. em. Dr. Wim A. G. Blonk, Mr. André Bontems and Mr. Olivier Vanden Eynde. They are appointed by the Board of Directors.

Counsellors

Close the Gap's counsellors complement the Board of Directors and consist of a number of persons from different countries willing to support Close the Gap in terms of networking and visibility. Counsellors do not have any legal authority but mainly act as ambassadors for the organisation. They can undertake meaningful and purposeful activities for support in terms of policy, planning, evaluation, public relations and fundraising. Counsellors are active in many countries within different sectors such as development, education, health and microfinance.

Strategic Partners

Close the Gap could not exist without the daily support of its strategic partner network. All the strategic partners support the organisation through philanthropic activities in their specific fields.

Managing Director

The Board of Directors has entrusted the daily management to Olivier Vanden Eynde, founder of the organisation, by means of a management agreement. Two members of the Board of Directors hold an annual evaluation session with the Managing Director as part of an ongoing, collaborative inquiry to explore the daily functioning of the Managing Director.

External audit

Since transparency is a key component of a healthy organisation, Close the Gap is audited on a yearly basis by Grant Thornton Bedrijfsrevisoren - Réviseurs d'entreprises CVBA - SCRL Belgium (previously known as PKF Business Advisors Belgium). The audit is conducted in accordance with legal and statutory requirements and provides assurance that the financial statements are free of material misstatement. The audit process includes measuring the accounting principles used and significant estimates made by the management, as well as evaluation of the overall financial statements. This allows the organisation to better inform the public about how resources have been used.

Internal audit

Close the Gap wants to be a reliable partner for its donors and partners at all times. In order to ensure the transparent and professional use of funds (raised by strategic partners, donors and subsidiary governments), Deloitte supports Close the Gap with internal audits, risk management and legal support, as well as providing Deloitte experts to carry out all the accounting. A biannual audit conducted by Deloitte oversees the entire technical path to guarantee that the refurbishment and logistic track, as well as the quality assurance of the equipment delivered to Close the Gap projects, take place in a consistent and transparent way.

ACCOUNTABILITY

Audit and Budget Committees

The Audit and the Budget Committees come together once a year. The Budget Committee gathers to prepare the budget for the upcoming fiscal year with final approval provided by the Board of Directors. The Audit Committee is organised, traditionally during the month of May, to prepare the annual accounts together with the external auditor Grant Thornton. The annual accounts are then presented to the Board of Directors and the General Assembly for final approval. The Audit Committee, as well as the Budget Committee, consist of Mr. Guido Vandervorst, Mr. Michel De Brauwier, Prof. em. Dr. Wim A. G. Blonk and Mr. Olivier Vanden Eynde.

Technical Committee

Close the Gap's Technical Committee advises the Board of Directors on various technical matters. In particular, this committee advises on the development of environmentally-friendly and low consuming technology solutions as well as in challenging Close the Gap's solutions in terms of green ICT hardware and software solutions for developing countries. Mrs. Alessandra Azcarraga Sepul, Mr. André Bontems, Prof. em. Dr. Wim A. G. Blonk and Mr. Olivier Vanden Eynde are the members of this Committee.

Project management

This entire process of transparency by internal and external auditing is strengthened furthermore by Close the Gap's policy concerning its project management, which operates clearly through a neutral and independent selection of projects based on clearly defined criteria. The two guiding principles are the sustainability of the project and the concept of local ownership by each project beneficiary. This means that local partners are ultimately responsible for the results of their supported activities. In most cases, Close the Gap charges a modest contribution per computer configuration, but exceptions can occur when external funds or Close the Gap funds are available to bear the costs of a project. To enhance the long-term self-supporting nature of its projects, Close the Gap offers all-inclusive solutions to its partners, including peripheral equipment, additional hardware and software and capacity building programmes through various qualitative partnerships, both local and international. The tools provided by these partnerships lead to improved sustainable projects and help to bring people together to exchange knowledge and experience. A large number of projects have benefitted from these broad sources of support, thereby securing a sustainable and independent integration of Close the Gap equipment.

Communication

Having a well-developed and open communication strategy – both in the short and the long term – is vital to an organisation like Close the Gap. Therefore, a traceable communication path was established over time to improve the organisation's transparency. This was done by providing information about every step in Close the Gap's process chain. In practice, this means that all communication matters are handled by the polyvalent Close the Gap team, coordinated by the Managing Director, who makes sure that all relevant information about projects executed, partnerships and other facts are accessible through Close the Gap's website, newsletters and other communication channels.

Social entrepreneurship

In the rapidly developing non-profit world, it is important for an organisation to become self-sufficient rather than having to depend entirely or partly on contributions or subsidies. Close the Gap is aware of this and therefore operates as a social enterprise, combining the passion of a social, philanthropic mission with the very best of the for-profit enterprising world. It is, however, important to mention that Close the Gap's social and environmental mission will always be central to all its activities.

Risk management

For Close the Gap, it is important to focus its programmes on long-term goals, since the digital divide cannot be bridged within a day. This means it is important to build in financial assurance. Close the Gap has various ways of dealing with the risk of fluctuating income and the implications of this on the continuity of its projects. The organisation manages financial risks through a policy of spreading income. Income is obtained from multiple sources, including individual donors, gifts from strategic partners and institutional donors.





FINANCIAL REPORT



Project in Indonesia

Close the Gap has financial transparency in its management in order to be able to account at any given moment for the use of the funds assigned to the organisation, whether by third parties, companies, private individuals or public authorities.



FINANCIAL REPORT

By actively fundraising for financial and computer contributions, Close the Gap can guarantee its existence as a financially self-supporting organisation and remain fully focused on its core activities, namely helping organisations in developing countries to continuously reduce the digital divide.

Close the Gap is a non-profit organisation partly funded by financial donations from third parties such as companies, governments and private individuals and partly funded by its own operational activities, i.e. making computers available to developing projects at cost price. If Close the Gap is unable to use specific computers from donations, for example because of a mismatch between quality and minimum specifications or because of a significant short time overstock of unusable computers, which would lead to high storage costs, the computers are offered (commercially) to third-party brokerage firms or recycled, while respecting any specific conditions agreed on with the donors. The revenues generated (by means of revenue share), combined with revenues generated from limited contributions from buyers of hardware for development projects, allow Close the Gap to cover its annual operational and administrative costs. Deloitte regularly audits the revenue share process at Close the Gap and any third parties involved to ensure proper reporting and accurate handling of this process. The money generated is used to support sustainable projects in developing countries where there is a clear need for IT solutions but where no (or very small) budgets are available to pay for the out-of-pocket expenses for the refurbished computers. In this way, Close the Gap is one of the organisations able to provide beneficiary partners in developing countries with co-funding, as well as invest in innovative solutions with its partners to tackle the digital divide effectively.

In order to keep its operational costs as low as possible, Close the Gap mainly relies on in-kind contributions for most of its activities.

The Board of Directors guarantees that all donations to Close the Gap projects are handled in a professional manner and are completely free of profit. In order to guarantee that all sponsoring funds are used as intended, Close the Gap is audited on a yearly basis by the registered and independent auditor Grant Thornton.



Auditor's report to the annual members' meeting of the association Close The Gap International vzw on the financial statements for the year ended December 31, 2012

In accordance with the legal and statutory requirements, we report to you on the performance of the audit assignment, which has been entrusted to us. This report contains our opinion on the true and fair view of the financial statements as well as the required additional statements.

Unqualified audit opinion on the financial statements

We have audited the financial statements for the year ended December 31, 2012, prepared in accordance with the financial reporting framework applicable in Belgium, which show a balance sheet total of EUR 5.533.038,54 and a positive balance for the year of EUR 234.089,03.

Management is responsible for the preparation and the fair presentation of these financial statements. This responsibility includes: designing, implementing and maintaining internal control relevant to the preparation and fair presentation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error; selecting and applying appropriate accounting policies; and making accounting estimates that are reasonable in the circumstances.

Our responsibility is to express an opinion on these financial statements based on our audit. We conducted our audit in accordance with the legal requirements and the Auditing Standards applicable in Belgium, as issued by the Institute of Registered Auditors (*Institut des Réviseurs d'Entreprises / Instituut van de Bedrijfsrevisoren*). Those standards require that we plan and perform the audit to obtain reasonable assurance whether the financial statements are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

In accordance with the above-mentioned auditing standards, we have implemented control procedures designed to obtain evidence supporting the amounts and disclosures included in the financial statements. The choice of these procedures is the result of our own judgement which includes the risk assessment whether the financial statements contain material misstatements, whether due to fraud or error.

In assessing the risk, we considered the association's internal control procedures regarding the preparation and the fair presentation of these financial statements in order to define the appropriate control procedures in the given circumstances, but not with the aim to express an opinion as to the effectiveness of the association's internal controls. We have assessed the appropriateness of accounting policies and the reasonableness of the accounting estimates made by the association as well as the overall financial statement presentation.

We have obtained from management and the association's officials, the explanations and information necessary for executing our audit procedures. We believe that these procedures provide a reasonable basis for our opinion.



In our opinion, the financial statements for the year ended afsluitdatum give a true and fair view of the association's assets and liabilities, its financial position and the results of its operations in accordance with the financial reporting framework applicable in Belgium.

Additional statements

The compliance by the association with the Law related to not-for-profit associations, international not-for-profit associations and foundations is the responsibility of management.

Our responsibility is to supplement our report with the following additional statements, which do not modify our audit opinion on the financial statements:

- Taking into account that the audit of the report of the board of directors is not part of our legal mission, we do not give an opinion upon its contents.
- Without prejudice to formal aspects of minor importance, the accounting records were maintained in accordance with the legal and regulatory requirements applicable in Belgium.
- There are no transactions undertaken or decisions taken in violation of the association's statutes or the Law related to not-for-profit associations, international not-for-profit associations and foundations that we have to report to you.

Brussels, May 17, 2013

Grant Thornton Bedrijfsrevisoren CVBA
Represented by

Gunther Loits
Registered Auditor

FINANCIAL REPORT

BALANCE SHEET	31/12/2012	31/12/2011	31/12/2010	31/12/2009	31/12/2008
ASSETS					
FIXED ASSETS	15,460.18	15,867.62	12,239.74	11,455.24	11,188.20
Intangible assets	0.00	0.00	1,666.66	3,333.33	
Tangible assets	15,460.18	15,867.62	10,573.08	8,121.91	11,188.20
Plant, machinery and equipment	402.22	900.32	989.83	1,288.80	1,852.21
Furniture and vehicles	13,125.96	12,759.30	7,099.25	6,833.11	9,335.99
Other tangible fixed assets	1,932.00	2,208.00	2,484.00		
CURRENT ASSETS	5,517,578.36	5,559,033.89	4,864,011.48	4,016,610.62	3,070,073.08
Stocks and contracts in progress	1	1	1	1	1
Stocks	1	1	1	1	1
Goods purchased for resale	1	1	1	1	1
Amounts receivable within one year	960,809.51	778,536.89	356,668.57	461,702.59	276,474.82
Trade Debtors	788,671.20	741,099.04	291,731.11	381,278.93	251,963.28
Other amounts receivable	172,138.31	37,437.85	64,937.46	80,423.66	24,511.54
Cash at bank and in hand	4,478,351.07	4,692,292.10	4,466,734.24	3,456,785.49	2,785,320.44
VLIR-ICT, DNS Fund	1,871,671.67	2,346,735.72	3,060,765.79	2,242,792.29	1,594,320.70
Own Cash	2,606,679.40	2,345,556.38	1,405,968.45	1,213,993.20	1,190,999.74
Deferred charges and accrued income	78,416.78	88,203.90	40,607.67	98,121.54	8,276.82
TOTAL ASSETS	5,533,038.54	5,574,901.51	4,876,251.22	4,028,065.86	3,081,261.28

BALANCE SHEET					
LIABILITIES					
CAPITAL AND RESERVES	2,658,014.60	2,423,925.57	1,851,128.12	1,628,908.90	1,384,405.24
Association's funds	9,461.62	9,461.62	9,461.62	9,461.62	9,461.62
Starting Capital	9,461.62	9,461.62	9,461.62	9,461.62	9,461.62
Funds allocated by Close The Gap	584,503.48	589,719.25	498,126.24	655,070.47	639,603.47
Result carried forward	2,064,049.50	1,824,744.70	1,343,540.26	964,376.81	735,340.15
PROVISIONS	35,064.63	97,197.42	67,887.10	54,059.25	
Provisions for liabilities and charges	35,064.63	97,197.42	67,887.10	54,059.25	
CREDITORS	2,839,959.31	3,053,778.52	2,957,236.00	2,345,097.71	1,696,856.04
Amounts payable within one year	2,443,325.12	2,595,068.04	2,323,452.09	1,570,172.26	223,063.02
Financial Debts					
Trade debts	313,880.07	534,633.15	288,932.96	270,058.57	164,102.89
Suppliers	313,880.07	534,633.15	288,932.96	270,058.57	164,102.89
Advances received on contracts in progress	2,090,927.88	2,033,899.71	1,999,412.06	1,247,341.65	0.00
Taxes, remuneration, and social security taxes	38,517.17	19,935.18	35,107.07	51,108.40	57,296.49
Taxes	0.00	0.05	3,651.60	6,081.94	31,315.30
Remuneration and social security	38,517.17	19,935.13	31,455.47	45,026.46	25,981.19
Other amounts payable	0.00	6,600.00	1,663.64	1,663.64	1,663.64
Accrued charges and different income	396,634.19	458,710.48	633,783.91	774,925.45	1,473,793.02
TOTAL LIABILITIES	5,533,038.54	5,574,901.51	4,876,251.22	4,028,065.86	3,081,261.28

INCOME STATEMENTS						
Operating income	A	1,752,669.28	1,851,958.90	1,979,014.44	1,629,270.85	1,588,984.83
Turnover		1,516,977.10	1,457,542.55	1,512,524.03	1,136,135.82	1,112,344.89
Contributions, donations, grants, etc		206,918.15	384,954.64	406,743.55	483,514.67	449,774.88
Other operating income		28,774.03	9,461.71	59,746.86	9,620.36	26,865.06
Operating charges	(-)	1,621,425.13	1,305,011.34	1,778,996.59	1,347,811.89	1,359,899.65
Intermediate consumption	B	1,241,186.57	973,842.05	1,231,256.80	1,023,368.15	1,089,587.63
Raw materials, consumables and goods for resale		840,042.38	667,479.35	923,309.95	730,505.37	773,879.97
Purchases	600/8	840,042.38	667,479.35	923,309.95	730,505.37	773,879.97
Increase (-); decrease(+) in stocks						
Services and other goods		401,144.19	306,362.70	307,946.85	292,862.78	315,707.66
Gross Margin (Pos result)	A-B	511,482.71	878,116.85	747,757.64	605,902.70	499,397.20
Remunerations, social security costs and pensions		338,953.38	214,442.51	211,688.33	202,613.28	187,298.75
Depreciation of and amounts written off formations expenses intangible and tangible fixed assets		5,918.16	5,896.21	6,856.52	6,042.96	6,106.10
Provisions for Liabilities and charges: Appropriations (+/-)		-62,132.79	29,310.32	13,827.85	54,059.25	
Other operating charges		37,367.02	110,830.57	329,194.94	115,787.50	76,907.17
Operating result	(+)	193,376.94	517,637.24	186,190.00	227,399.71	229,085.18
Financial income		42,507.78	56,677.25	39,253.90	18,184.42	26,072.49
Income from current assets		42,012.78	55,996.83	39,078.32	17,966.98	23,631.70
Other financial income		495.00	680.42	175.58	217.44	2,440.79
Financial charges	(-)	-1,795.69	-1,517.04	-3,224.68	-1,080.47	-3,131.23
Interest nad other debt charge		43.65	0.00	1,924.72	22.21	205.92
Other financial charges		1,752.04	1,517.04	1,299.96	1,058.26	2,925.31
Result on ordinary activities	(+)	234,089.03	572,797.45	222,219.22	244,503.66	252,026.44
Extraordinary income	(+)	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Write-back of depreciations						
Result for the year	(+)	234,089.03	572,797.45	222,219.22	244,503.66	252,026.44
Result for the period allocated to funds	(-)				15,467.00	9,630.00
RESULT FOR THE PERIOD TO BE CARRIED FORWARD	(+)	234,089.03	572,797.45	222,219.22	229,036.66	242,396.44



The title 'VISION OF THE FUTURE' is rendered in a bold, black, sans-serif font. The word 'VISION' is on the top line, 'OF THE' is on the second line, and 'FUTURE' is on the third line. A thick, pink, rounded rectangular graphic element is overlaid on the text, framing the 'V' and 'I' of 'VISION' and the 'O' and 'F' of 'OF'. The graphic element has a white interior and a pink border, creating a visual effect of a window or a frame.

“With the passing of another year, it is a real privilege for me as Founder and Managing Director of this inspiring organisation to share some insights into the future with all our members, stakeholders and the wider public. 2013 will be a transitional year, with key moments for reflecting on a new era for Close the Gap. In September 2013, Close the Gap will celebrate its official 10th anniversary. An ideal moment for Close the Gap’s Board of Directors and management team to shape fundamental ideas for the future. The road to 2020 has started and I’m excited that I can share some insights into our new strategy with you and work with you in the coming years to jointly walk this path!

First of all, we’re looking at ‘evolution’, not revolution. Close the Gap’s model is based on a demand-driven mechanism and the facts and figures clearly show that the organisation is still adding value through its mainstream activities. The demand for computers is still increasing every year.

Therefore the aim is to continue to do what our various stakeholders expect us to and, on top of that, to envisage some key future elements that will without a doubt be requested by our project partners and stakeholders in the coming years.

As a major player operating in the rapidly evolving ICT sector with the ambitious goal of closing the digital divide, it is key for Close the Gap to closely follow all trends and changes in this market, respond to these accordingly and adapt its business model to safeguard its mission if necessary.

A recent example was the creation of WorldLoop. Close the Gap realised that the environmental sustainability of ICT projects was becoming increasingly important to its stakeholders, so we decided to lead the way in promoting environmentally sound take-back and recycling services for e-waste in developing countries. Looking back, this step proved to be a big success for Close the Gap. It secured the environmental sustainability of its projects and answered any possible criticisms of the operational model, while at the same time providing significant environmental benefits.

Close the Gap is active in developing countries with challenging conditions and increasingly realises that if it truly wants to accomplish its mission and bridge the digital divide for the 1 billion people at the bottom of the socio-economic pyramid and help end-users in remote areas, then it can no longer focus solely on providing ICT hardware.

Over the past years, Close the Gap has identified the need for an integrated service offering (ISO), and proposed a total package of products and services needed in order for its target audience in developing countries to gain access to ICT. The components of this package can be offered either by Close the Gap itself or through strategic partnerships and alliances with other organisations or companies.

 VISION OF THE FUTURE

Some of these products and services have already been part of customised offerings to project beneficiaries. However, Close the Gap wants to extend this service in a consistent way in its focus countries.

Through various pilot projects Close the Gap, together with its Board of Directors, is evaluating the impact and efficiency of the following products and services:

- **POWER** - Any ICT device needs power. In many developing countries, only a small part of Close the Gap's targeted end-users are connected to the electricity grid. In rural areas especially, grid connectivity is a real challenge. The powering of ICT equipment should always be considered as part of the end-user's total power needs (ICT, lighting, etc.) and be adapted to local conditions (grid access, wind conditions, amount of sun, etc). Possible options are the electricity grid, fossil fuels, solar energy, wind energy, biomass, biofuel and geothermal energy.
- **INTERNET CONNECTIVITY** - Today, access to ICT without Internet connectivity would be unimaginable to us, so why should this be any different for projects in developing countries? Access to the Internet is a vital component of effectively bridging the digital divide. Therefore this connection should be part of the standard package of products and services. Possible options are cable, DSL, satellite and 3G.
- **ICT HARDWARE** - Close the Gap initially started by providing personal computers for projects, but due to rapid changes in the ICT sector the scope of the equipment offered has already widened and will be further evaluated. Possible options include personal computers (desktops/laptops), servers, thin clients, notebooks, notepads, tablets, smartphones, network hubs, modems, printers, scanners, MFPs, etc.

Over the years, Close the Gap has become a key actor in terms of computer refurbishment, sustainability of ICT projects and e-waste management. So it has gained expertise that makes it ideal for playing an increasing role as a knowledge centre for ICT4DEV. The idea is gaining ground that Close the Gap should be an umbrella organisation or a network-weaving organisation, encompassing the different practical and theoretical fields of ICT4DEV to play a leading role in meeting environmental and social challenges with all the latest technological tools at its disposal. Close the Gap would then provide a sustainable and scientifically based all-round solution for ICT4DEV issues.

Our mission is to help shape the ICT projects we encourage, enabling a growing positive impact on the end-users and ensuring access to new technologies in a safe and trusted environment.

At Close the Gap, we strongly believe that solutions to improve living standards are at hand, fuelled by scientific research and ICT. We are optimistic, but we still retain a sense of reality. In 2013, Close the Gap will strive to implement the above-mentioned priorities, pragmatically translating them into measurable and effective day-to-day activities. Together with our Board of Directors, no effort will be spared to remain true to our mission of being the initiator of ethically and sustainably acceptable ICT projects for development, thereby creating a worldwide federation based on Close the Gap's values, experience and strengths.

2013 will be a key year to leverage our competences, together with our peer organisations, to become partners of larger initiatives in the field of ICT4DEV, initiated by incubators such as the European Union, the United Nations, the World Bank, and foundations and corporations operating worldwide in our industry. We would like to create or co-create initiatives by making funds available for useful and necessary project developments that serve our vision and lead to social return on investment (SRI). Innovation that serves as a 'tool and instrument' for Close the Gap's mission will become a strong pillar throughout our value proposition. I trust that a constructive dialogue with our stakeholders can shape this futuristic vision into concrete reality."

—
 Olivier Vanden Eynde
 Founder and Managing Director
 Close the Gap



CONTACT DETAILS

Close the Gap Int. vzw/asbl

Registration number: 860353772

Close the Gap visitor address

Pleinlaan 5
1050 Brussels
Belgium

Tel: +32 (0)2 614 81 60

Fax: +32 (0)2 611 60 69

Close the Gap's administrative address

p/a Vrije Universiteit Brussel
Faculteit ESP
Pleinlaan 2
1050 Brussels
Belgium

Bank details

Account number: 001-4128329-85

Bank: BNP Paribas Fortis

IBAN code: BE89001412832985

SWIFT/BIC: GEBABEBB

VAT number Belgium: BE 0860 353 772

VAT number the Netherlands: NL 8153.23.062.B01

Website: www.close-the-gap.org

E-mail:

To donate your IT equipment:

donations@close-the-gap.org

To apply for a project:

projects@close-the-gap.org

For communication and press enquiries:

communication@close-the-gap.org

For general questions and information:

info@close-the-gap.org

CONTACT DETAILS



Close the Gap International vzw/asbl

c/o Vrije Universiteit Brussel
Pleinlaan 2, 1050 Brussels, Belgium

Composition

Overall coordination: Ms. Joëlle Verriest, Close the Gap
PR, Communication & Office Manager

English adaptation and proofreading: Ms. Nirmala Patel

Financial Information

Grant Thornton (External Auditor)
Deloitte (Accountant)

Editor

Close the Gap International vzw/asbl

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