

# CIRCLE in action

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## Introduction

CIRCLE (Community-based Innovations to Reduce Child Labor through Education) is a global project that identifies and promotes, through sub-contracts, innovative community-based pilot projects that address the reduction of child labor through education. In two major rounds of funding, the CIRCLE project has awarded 17 sub-contracts to NGOs in seven countries in Latin America. Please see the CIRCLE web site <http://circle.winrock.org> for NGO Project Summaries, Spotlight Stories and Newsletters that provide information on CIRCLE activities and the global movement to stop child labor.

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## Sumando Opens New Paths for Domestic Child Workers

Domestic child workers generally have limited educational opportunities, which decreases their potential capacity to find ways to a better professional future. In Asunción, Paraguay, Winrock's partner Sumando, supported by CIRCLE from June 2005 to May 2006, changed the lives of 25 domestic laborers, 15 to 18 years old, through the project entitled Opening New Paths.

The project provided adolescents with access to formal education through a distance-learning methodology adequate to their needs. As distance learning allows children to have more time flexibility, reduces transportation cost and time, and requires less time at school, this methodology is an alternative for domestic workers that have time or distance constraints. Children participating in the program are in the process of finishing the 3<sup>rd</sup> round of secondary schooling (7<sup>th</sup>, 8<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> grades) in one single year. They also learned new skills, such as time management and planning, and developed their capacity to "learn to learn, learn to do, learn to share and learn to take risks". Of the 25 adolescents that enrolled in the program, 13 have already completed the 3<sup>rd</sup> round, and the remaining 12 will complete it by December. Some of them are adolescent mothers or pregnant teenagers.



One of the two of the more significant outcomes of the project was the rescue of three adolescents from sexual exploitation. These children are now being cared for at *Hogar San Vicente de Paul* (Saint Vincent de Paul Home). In addition, a group of adolescent workers who graduated from the Opening New Paths project is being supported by the Children's Council, ILO, religious groups and socially responsible entrepreneurs to take a leading role in protecting their younger siblings from the threat of exploitative child labor.

Now that the project has ended, the children assisted by Sumando through CIRCLE will be ready to continue their secondary education through the new distance learning course now offered by the Ministry of Education and Culture in Paraguay.

*"We cannot change the life history of children and adolescents, but we can improve their future, with projects like this, that provides them with education, care, recreation, personalized attention and a space where they belong".* - Yole Boggino, Project Director.

For more information about the project, please contact Yole Boggino at [academica@sumando.org.py](mailto:academica@sumando.org.py).

## Request for Proposals: Urgent Action Contracts

CIRCLE is seeking proposals for Urgent Action Contracts (UACs) from community-based organizations for innovative projects that promote access to quality education for children being withdrawn or prevented from exploitative child labor. Short-term, quick impact projects will be funded for amounts of **\$3,000 - \$5,000**, for terms of **two-three months**. Projects must be of an urgent nature and must be proposed by locally registered, national non-governmental organizations (NGOs) in developing countries. Projects that are urgent and also innovative in their approach will receive the highest priority for funding. There is no submission deadline. The Request for Proposals (RFP) application and Press Release are available on the CIRCLE web site at <http://circle.winrock.org/rfp.cfm> in English, Spanish, and French. For more information about this request or about the CIRCLE project in Latin America, please contact Adriana Alvarez, Deputy Manager for Latin America, at [aalvarez@winrock.org.br](mailto:aalvarez@winrock.org.br).

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## CIRCLE expands its support in Latin America

In May 2006, four Latin American NGOs (two from Brazil and two from Bolivia) were selected to receive support of CIRCLE in the third round of the project. They participated in a week-long training about both technical and financial aspects of the CIRCLE project. Presented below are the new CIRCLE Partners in Latin America:

**Casa Renascer**, a leader in the fight against commercial sexual exploitation of children and adolescents. A reference center for victims of sexual violence in the city of Natal, State of Rio Grande do Norte, Brazil, will implement a nine-month project to raise the awareness in Natal of damages caused by child labor and of the importance of education for all children. Casa Renascer aims to create a social methodology which builds an institutional bond between Casa Renascer, the families, the schools and the communities located along the coastline of the city of Natal. Casa Renascer will also advocate for improved educational infrastructure in the city.

**CEBIAE**, Centro Boliviano de Investigación y Acción Educativas, headed in La Paz, Bolivia, will promote an inter-institutional network to fight child labor in the city of Potosí, where unofficial statistics estimate that there are approximately 5,000 young children and adolescents in the labor force in various sectors. The goal of the CEBIA's project is to strengthen the network and coordinate the institutions and organizations of Potosí's municipality, with the perspective of helping to generate policies and programs in the field of education, involving wide social participation, and focusing on the prevention and eradication of child labor as part of the program "Potosí, Education City."

**CENDHEC**, Center Dom Helder Câmara of Studies and Social Action, will implement the 12-month project "From Child Labor to Participation" that aims to strengthen public policies in the city of Recife, State of Pernambuco, in Brazil, and increase the local awareness about the damage of child labor to both personal and social development. The project aims to qualify the action of PETI (Federal Program for the Eradication of Child Labor) in the municipality and do social control of the public policies through the development and evaluation of the Municipal Plan. Another objective is to promote the participation of children and adolescents and mobilize public opinion about this issue. The project aims to reach around 3,990 children and adolescents from the PETI or public schools that are exploited or at risk of exploitive child labor.

**Obispo Anaya Program** in Bolivia will implement the 15-month project "OBISPO ANAYA" Educative Annex in the Valle Hermoso zone in the southern part of Cochabamba, where a Municipal Rubbish Dump is located and garbage collecting has become the local economic activity for children from 6 to 14 years old in most parts of the day, under unsafe and exploitative conditions. The main purpose of the project is to educate working children and remove or prevent them from this hazardous work. The project will gradually introduce a series of incentives for working children to attend school, incentives such as meal delivery and computer training courses. The proposal is designed with a hands-on program on environmental and ecological education.

CIRCLE Regional Launch Meeting in Salvador, Bahia, Brazil



## CHILD LABOR REDUCES IN LAC, BUT INCREASES IN BRAZIL

ILO's Global Report on Child Labor 2006 revealed that child labor among children in the age of 5 to 14 years old in Latin America and the Caribbean reduced around 11% from 2002 to 2006, with currently 15.7 child laborers in the region. In the 95<sup>th</sup> International Conference on Labor, ILO Director Juan Somavia mentioned programs in Brazil (Bolsa Familia) and Mexico (Oportunidades) as successful policies to reduce child labor in the region and stressed the importance of international cooperation to continue addressing the problem. From 2004 to 2005, according to the Brazilian Institute of Geography and Statistics (IBGE), child labor among children in the ages 5 to 14 years old increased 10.3% in Brazil, possibly as a result of the agriculture crisis in the country.

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## Restoring Children and Adolescents' Rights in Guatemala

According to the ILO, in Guatemala there are approximately 2.5 million working children and adolescents - this workforce is responsible for 20% of the country's gross domestic product.

One of CIRCLE's partners in Guatemala, PAMI - *Programa de Apoyo para la Salud Materno Infantil y para la Salud de otros Grupos de Riesgo* - has worked to support the reduction of children's vulnerability to labor in the Municipality of Panajachel, Department of Sololá. This partner created an initiative that increased school attendance of 32 adolescents and helped lead to the development of a new public policy for children and adolescents' rights.



The students supported by the program were selected through an open solicitation. PAMI provided the selected students with scholarships, tutors and job skills workshops on computers (maintenance and software), sewing and handicrafts, and met regularly with parents and school staff to monitor the progress of students. Besides the direct support to this group, PAMI worked closely with authorities in the Municipality of

Panajachel and stakeholders such as the Community, Municipal, and Departmental Development Councils to develop a plan supportive to children and adolescents. The work included research to update the analysis of the situation of local children and adolescents and the development of a plan advocating for the rights of children and adolescents, all in collaboration with the Commission of Women, Children and Youth of the Municipal Development Council and the groups of beneficiaries supported by CIRCLE. There were periodic meetings with authorities to approve the Plan and its budget by the Development Council and the Mayor. This new public policy seeks to "restore the rights of children and adolescents in Panajachel, Sololá, to education, health, recreation, and protection against drug addiction, mistreatment, sexual abuse and exploitation, and labor exploitation".

The new legislation in Panajachel will promote the strengthening of the local educational system, implement health educational and prevention campaigns on mistreatment and sexual abuse and exploitation, a sports and recreation program, and establish the Woman, Children and Youth Department with a total budget for 2006 and 2007. These resources will finance scholarships and school materials to 97 students in 2006, and 150 in 2007, foster capacity building for grant holders and parents, promote hiring of additional teachers for three local schools, and support the establishment of a school for child laborers.

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