

# On the Path to Sustainability

Spirit of Service 03

High-Quality Public Education 04

Digital Inclusion 05

Charms of the Southern Lowlands 06

New Rural Entrepreneurs 07

Artisans of Development 08

Together, We Are One! 09

Exchanging Experiences 10-12

#### Editorial

Together, we are all one! This motto aptly represents the aims of the Program for the Integrated and Sustainable Development of the Mosaic of Environmental Protection Areas (EPA) in the Bahia Southern Lowlands (PDIS), established by the Odebrecht Foundation. Encouraging youth to play an active role as agents of social action and contributing to the formation of a community structured in family units that are responsible for their own development, the Program is firmly established in the region through programs and partnerships. This reinforces the idea that "unity is strength."

To find out more about these initiatives, we invite you to read this issue, which focuses on the following topics: quality education, work opportunities and income creation, civic participation, digital inclusion and sustainable tourism.

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Cover Photo

Cooperative of Southern Lowlands Hearts-of-Palm Producers, represented by the Grima dos Santos family



## Spirit of Service

The year has barely started and the Rights and Citizenship Institute (IDC) has already reached an important milestone: over 300,000 services provided to Bahia Southern Lowlands communities. "This is a major achievement for citizens' rights and the outcome of the credibility and trust the institution is gaining," says the Institute's Executive Director, Maria Celeste Pereira.

The IDC contributes to the development of civic life by raising the community's awareness and spreading participatory democracy by structuring and strengthening social organizations. The public has access to free services such as legal aid, conflict mediation and key documents (such as birth certificates and ID cards) provided at the three Rights Desks in the Bahia counties of Camamu, Nilo Peçanha and Presidente Tancredo Neves.



## **High-Quality Public Education**

"A master isn't always a teacher — he's sometimes someone who learns." This phrase, by writer Guimarães Rosa, was one of quotations declaimed by the singer Maria Bethânia recited during "Bethânia and Words," performed in honor of Youth House State High School (CECJ), the winner of the National Benchmark Award in School Management — Base Year 2009. The event, held on January 28 at the Vila Velha Theater in Salvador, Bahia, was hosted by representatives of public schools and universities in that state. In the end, the singer stressed that CECJ is an example to be followed. "Youth House is proof that it is possible to believe in high-quality public education," she observed.

Representatives of the teaching staff, as well as the Governor of Bahia, Jaques Wagner, the Director of Bahia's educational TV station (TVE), Pola Ribeiro, and the host of the Tô Sabendo ("I'm in the Know") program broadcast by TVE, Jorge Portugal, were also present.

The following month, at the request of the National Council of Secretaries of Education (CONSED), CECJ principal Francisco Nascimento went to Brasília to give a talk to Brazil's 27 state secretaries of education on how to help improve the management of public schools.





## **Digital Inclusion**

Daniela Assunção, 18, a student in class 02 at the Igrapiúna Family House (CFR-I) was the first pupil to correctly answer 100% of the questions on the final exam for the Microsoft Digital Literacy course, made possible by the Caia na Rede (Hit the Net) project. To reward her achievement, she was honored at the graduation ceremony where Emílio Munaro, Educational Director of Microsoft Brazil, handed out the certificates. "This recognition symbolizes an incentive for you to keep improving," he says. Held on January 25, the event brought together students from the CFR-I and other Family Houses (Rural – PTN, Águas - Ituberá, and Agroforestry – Nilo Peçanha) as well as the Military Academy and Building Better.

Hit the Net is the result of a partnership agreement signed in May 2009 between Odebrecht S.A., the Odebrecht Foundation, Microsoft, Dell and Oi, with

the aim of bringing digital inclusion to educational

projects associated with the PDIS. By December 2010, 1,091 people had benefited from this initiative, and in the first quarter of this year, there will be 601 more beneficiaries.







The Eco-ethnic tourism itinerary on the Costa do Dendê that the Institute for the Sustainable Development of the Bahia Southern Lowlands (IDES) created in partnership with the Agência Ativa Rafting e Aventuras was the only one in Bahia to be selected by the Rural Brazil Talent Project, which encourages the inclusion of family farm products and services in the tourism market. The itinerary includes Pratigi Beach, the Almas River and the former maroon community of Jatimane.

Rural Brazil Talent will invest over than BRL

3 million in 24 tourist itineraries in this country
to encourage the exchange of knowledge, value
cultural identity, create work opportunities and
sources of income and add value to the production
of groups of rural artisans. The project is the result
of a partnership between the Brazilian Ministries
of Rural Development, Tourism, and Environment,
the Brazilian Micro and Small Enterprises Service
(Sebrae) and the German Technical Cooperation
Agency.

### **New Rural Entrepreneurs**

Tilling the soil. Planting. Seeing the fruits grow. For Erivaldo de Jesus, 19, there is nothing better than going through each of these steps. A student at the Presidente Tancredo Neves Rural Family House (CFR-PTN), he is also a farmer and has decided to make that his life's work. "I can't see myself doing anything else," he guarantees. A resident of the Quebra Machado community in Valença, Bahia, the young farmer grows cassava with the help of his father, Manuel de Jesus. "I found a partner in my own house," says Erivaldo.

Erivaldo is the youngest member of the family and the only one of his four siblings to stay in the countryside, working alongside his parents. The young man says his father wanted his children to stay close to home, but there were no opportunities for them in the region. "They were encouraged to move to the city. The image of farming was always associated with people who never went to school. I'm living

proof that that's not true. It is possible to stay in the countryside and enjoy quality of life. I want to multiply my knowledge and contribute to local development", says the young rural entrepreneur, who plans to get a degree in Agronomy to continue his education.

This father-son partnership has already produced excellent results. With a smile on his face, Erivaldo on March 28 delivered the first batch of cassava for the President Tancredo Neves Cooperative of Rural Producers (Coopatan) — an institution that, like the CFR-PTN, is associated with the Program for the Integrated and Sustainable Development of the Mosaic of Environmental Protection Areas in the Bahia Southern Lowlands (PDIS), an initiative supported by Odebrecht Foundation. Erivaldo joined Coopatan 11 months ago. "I'm happy because he is an intelligent young man and dedicated to farming," says his father.



## **Artisans of Development**

"It's very rewarding to see what I can do. I put the coconut and fiber together, and play with different shapes," says Esdras Coutinho, a member of the Cooperative of Rural Producers in the Pratigi Environmental Protection Area (Cooprap). A resident of Taperoá, Bahia, he helped produce the Cooperative's first line of bio-jewelry. Called "APA do Pratigi", the collection includes 26 pieces and is being showcased at international handicraft fairs.

Cooprap's work has been recognized by the former President of Brazil, Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva. He sent a letter to the artisans to thank them for a gift he received: a piassava fiber mandala woven by Cooperative members. Lula and his wife, Marisa Letícia da Silva, posed beside the mandala for a photo. "Everyone was thrilled to bits by the letter and the photo," says Creuza, an artisan and the Executive President of Cooprap.





## Together, We Are One!

Bright eyes and broad smiles. They were all around when hundreds of youths from the Bahia Southern Lowlands got together to celebrate World Youth Day. The event was held simultaneously on March 30 in



Presidente Tancredo Neves and the five counties that make up the Pratigi EPA: Ituberá, Igrapiúna, Nilo Peçanha, Piraí do Norte and Ibirapitanga. Organized by the IDC, the celebration's main theme was Youth Protagonism.

Participants had access to cultural presentations, educational lectures and informative leaflets. "These initiatives are important for making young people increasingly aware of their role in society," observed Deusdete Júnior, the Secretary of Education for Piraí do Norte.

The event was one of many in the PDIS 2011 calendar in that region, held to underscore topics such as education, cooperativism, reading, youth, environmental conservation and culture.



## **Exchanging Experiences**

The first quarter of this year was the setting of important visits to the Southern Lowlands with the aim of getting to know institutions associated with the PDIS.







Angélica Goulart and Luiz Cláudio, from the Xuxa Meneghel Foundation, visit the Agir's headquarter



Agents of the Future from the Paraná Consortium learn about initiatives sponsored by Tribute to the Future



Members of YouthBuild, Terry Moffat, Chairman of the Board, and Tim Cross, President of YouthBuild International during a visit to the Odebrecht Culture Center in Salvador, Bahia



Joining CFR-PTN students, the representative of the General Consulate of Canada in São Paulo, Elise Racicot



Members of the Boa Lembrança Restaurants Association and the culinary magazine Prazeres da Mesa with young people from the Southern Lowlands



The mayors of Igrapiúna; Ituberá; Nilo Peçanha and Piraí do Norte visit PDIS's educational institutions



Francisco Sawaguthi, Director for Sustainability in Angola, and Ilana Cunha, responsible for Social Programs and Local Communities, exchange experiences with institutions from Southern Lowlands

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