

## CEFE BRASILIA

The **project** aims to support the training and education of high school students, typically aged between 14 and 18 years, through a commitment to accompany them during their three years of secondary school education.

The **primary objective** of this project is to provide secondary students with the cultural foundations required to pass the public university entrance exam. Course content is defined in accordance with ministry curricula.

A **second objective** is to provide appropriate support to students who, during the three years of the programme, show the aptitude or the need for direct entry to the labour market or to an advanced technical course.

The educational centres project is named after Edimar, a boy who lived in Brasilia from 1989 to 1994.

### Context

Edimar's story is just one example of the situation in Brasilia, where the basic education offered by state schools is seriously deficient both in terms of educational content, which is often dealt with superficially and without any appropriate study method, and in terms of the overall educational project, which is almost totally lacking. In addition, the family background of the youngsters is often one of severe disintegration and lack of stability. In most cases the household consists only of a mother and children, and the mother is the sole source of economic support.

Because of their inadequate education and their family background, it is extremely difficult for the children who attend state schools to acquire the knowledge and study methods necessary to gain entry to public universities. These are completely free, but demand a high level of preparation; thus, an exclusion mechanism is created, whereby only the wealthier students who can afford to go to private schools and receive the appropriate training succeed in gaining entry to public university courses. Instead, those from state secondary schools remain excluded from these universities because of their educational deficiencies. These students therefore have recourse to private universities, making great sacrifices to pay their exorbitant fees and receiving an inferior education to those at public universities. Against this backdrop, young people are attracted by the chance of easy money offered by the world of youth gangs, who engage in petty and serious criminal activities such as theft, drug abuse and trafficking, or prostitution, putting their lives at risk almost daily.

### Centre

The centre was set up by the teachers who had met Edimar and wanted to create a place that would give street children like him the chance of a proper education, both scholastically and from a human perspective.

The project is aimed at deserving high school students aged between 14 and 18 years from poor families living in the urban area of Brasilia. The objective is to increase their opportunities for social and economic rehabilitation through education and training

activities preparing them for university and for entry into the labour market, as well as promoting their personal growth.

The project is mainly aimed at pupils attending state schools where teaching is done by educators from the Edimar Association, the local partner for the development of the project. Teachers linked to the Association are present in three large school complexes covering a potential user base of about 6,000 students.

The students are selected based on economic need and academic merit. The following data are requested: age, level of education attained, total household income, whether the home is owned by the family, and marital status of the parents.

To be selected, the student's interest in the project must be evident. For those selected, the Centre covers the cost of travel from their home to the CEFE, and provides them with a full meal at lunchtime.

## **Activities**

The activities for educational development and scholastic orientation comprise:

- supplementary lessons in the subjects required to pass university entrance tests: history, geography, biology, mathematics, physics, chemistry, Portuguese and English;
- tutorial assistance for the study of all subjects taught at school;
- introduction to study methods;
- IT and computer lab;
- guidance in the choice of a study path and university faculty, and in entering the world of work;
- extra-curricular activities, with an introduction to art and music, as well as to personal growth.