The first meeting held for NGO partners. The Instructor of the Despertar NGO is talking to other NGOs about best practices in teaching IT Essentials to underserved young people in São Paulo. (UNV, August 2011)

IT essentials for development

São Paulo, Brazil: I have been working as a national United Nations Volunteer Specialist in Information and Communications Technology (ICT) for Cisco Networking Academy since October 2010. This has been an amazing experience which I would like to share.

Cisco Networking Academy is a Cisco corporate social responsibility initiative—an educational programme in ICTs. I have been working in expanding this programme’s reach to underserved populations in Brazil by working with local NGOs, mainly in the state of São Paulo.

As a result of my work, I have involved more than 20 NGOs. Some of these organizations have already started teaching the basic course offered by the Networking Academy, IT Essentials, and others are about to start their classes.

The support provided to these NGOs allows them to offer a high quality course to their public, free of charge, which enhances the possibilities of...
their students to enter the labour market.

IT Essentials is the first course of the Cisco Networking Academy programme, and it provides students with an overview of computer fundamentals and an introduction to advanced concepts. This course is a first step to enter the IT labour market.

In order to support these partners, we planned an event which was held last August 5th. The NGOs reported some of the problems encountered, like low grades, students who were giving up the classes, as well as other difficulties.

To help them, I invited a more experienced NGO, Associação Comunitária Despertar, to share best practices in teaching IT Essentials to marginalized people. This NGO has been offering this course since the beginning of 2010, and initially had the same difficulties, but found a way to overcome them.

This event was the first meeting of NGO partners, and brought together more than 30 managers and instructors from 16 different NGOs. The event was very successful, enabling participants to get to know each other, share experiences and learn from a more experienced instructor. Now, I will work for the integration of these NGOs so that they can support each other and expand the programme.

On the morning of the same day, we also held an event for the students of Associação Comunitária Despertar. Cisco experts talked to the students about education and the labour market, and received their IT Essentials certificate.

It was very fulfilling to see these young people so happy to be there and to have that opportunity. As they received their certificates, they clapped their hands enthusiastically and were very excited. I am extremely proud to have been a part of this and to have enabled this to happen.

It is such an honour to be a UN Volunteer, serving in my own country, and seeing the positive impact that this project is having.
Sustainable Development Goal: