

Proposal to DevNet Trust Fund

(Resubmitted 28 August, 2005 with responses for details from DevNet Board members)

1. Project Overview

1.1 Project Title

*Developing low cost solutions to increase access to Information Technology:
Pilot implementation at Cummings Lodge*

1.2 Estimated Budget:

\$450,000 -

\$340,000 from DevNet Trust Fund; SEWA contribution is \$110,000

1.3 Estimated Duration: Two months

1.4 Objectives

General Objective:

The General Objective of this project is to increase participation of Guyanese in the Information Society. The Information Society is one in which everyone can create, access, utilize and share information and knowledge, enabling individuals, communities and peoples to achieve their full potential in promoting their sustainable development and improving their quality of life

Specific Objectives

1. Build a network at Cummings Lodge Mandir using Linux Terminal Server software; and refurbished hardware
2. Train at least three persons in the installation and implementation of the Linux Terminal Server solution
3. Develop a management model for a community based in Guyana

1.5 Abstract

The development of the Information Society in Guyana will depend on the availability of affordable technology solutions which will allow people, especially poor people to have access through community centres.

In 2004, the National Centre for Educational Resource Development, NCERD, within the Ministry of Education, developed a pilot computer lab using refurbished hardware and using Linux Terminal Server software. This project was intended as demonstration of a low cost alternative for deployment in schools and community centres.

SEWA is a non-governmental organisation which has worked in the Cummings Lodge community, especially during the floods of January 2005. SEWA has also worked on various training projects with different communities.

The development of community telecentres requires not only the technology, but also a commitment from Community Based organisations to implement and manage the centres.

SEWA in collaboration with the Cummings Lodge Hindu Society is proposing to develop community based telecentre. They have allocated resources to develop some of the infrastructure for this project and are requesting support from the DevNet Trust Fund to further the purchase of a server. The prime beneficiaries of the project will be the members of the community of Cummings Lodge Area Y, a recently regularised squatting area.

The Cummings Lodge Mandir is an accessible point to the residents of this community, as was proven during the January 2005 floods when the Cummings Lodge Mandir was used as a health centre.

The model of this combination of community ownership, software and hardware solution will be made available to other communities.

2. ADMINISTRATIVE INFORMATION

2.1 Recipient Organisation:

Society for Empowerment and Wholistic Advancement (SEWA)

Address : Cummings Lodge Hindu Temple
Lot 3 Sixth Street
Cummings Lodge
East Coast Demerara
email : sewa_guyana@yahoo.co.uk

Contact Omar Bissoon, Secretary
Tel : 621-6881, 222-2350
email : omarbissoon@yahoo.com

2.2 Participating Organisations:

Cummings Lodge/Industry Hindu Society (CLHS)
University of Guyana Computer Centre (UGCC)
Guyana Linux Users Group (GLUG)

3. Problem and Justification

The development of an Information Society in Guyana requires that all persons could have affordable access to Information & Communication Technologies. The poor people in Guyana will depend on subsidised access which is shared through Community Telecentres. Guyana has no model at the moment for a community telecentre. The cost of developing and managing a community telecentre will depend on the kind of hardware and software which is used.

This proposal intends to develop a model for a low cost Community telecentre based on the work done in NCERD and intended for schools. The project will bring together community development activists, and persons from the IT profession who will develop the infrastructure, and also transfer some of the skills in training to manage the project.

This project is unique in that the pilot uses one new server, and the other equipment are second hand or refurbished. Some of the refurbishing skills will be transferred to members of the Cummings Lodge community.

The telecentre will be used for the following activities :-

- Increasing availability of IT resources to the members of the Cummings Lodge Area, especially the children and young persons from the Area Y .
- Provide a service to the small entrepreneurs in the area who need adhoc access to IT resources to support their business activities
- Provide a venue for training in the use of IT – productivity applications, and other tools to interested members of the community.

CLHS will be working on a plan to acquire Internet access for the telecentre from other sources.

There are potential areas for development, especially in the pursuit of economic opportunities. This pilot will be documented by SEWA and made available as a model for other communities.

The impact the telecentre is to have on the community is to increase the availability of Information Technology to enhance other activities such as learning within the community and the provision of opportunities for sharing and sourcing information which would otherwise be more difficult to do.

4. Project Activities & Responsibilities

Objective 1 : Build a network at Cummings Lodge Mandir using Linux Terminal Server software; and refurbished hardware

1.1 CLHS will furnish the site for the computer network and hardware. CLHS has a new electrical installation and will be purchasing the stabilisers and UPS.

1.2 SEWA will work with DevNet to acquire the other hardware

1.3 UG Computer Centre will work with Guyana Linux Users Group to build the installation . The initial installation will have one server and three terminals. Other terminals will be added as CLHS/SEWA mobilise donations of old computers.

Duration Four weeks

Objective 2: Train at least three persons in the installation and implementation of the Linux Terminal Server solution

2.1 CLHS and SEWA will identify persons to be trained in the administration of the network

2.2 GLUG will train the persons

Duration: Eight weeks

Objective 3: Develop a management model for a community based in Guyana

3.1 SEWA will document the experiences of this project

3.2. DevNet will conduct the monitoring and evaluation of the project.

Duration : Throughout the project.

5. Budget – Guyana dollars

<i>Item</i>	<i>DevNet</i>	<i>SEWA</i>
Hardware		
Server, printer peripherals, network cabling, hub	330,000	50,000
Electricity Wiring, UPS Furniture	0	60,000
Incidental Expenses	10,000	10,000
Total	340,000	110,000

5. Institutions and Personnel

Cummings Lodge/Industry Hindu Society – The CLHSS will be providing the venue, and acquiring furnishings, and electrical installations to support the pilot lab. CLHS will work with SEWA in acquiring Internet access.

University of Guyana Computer Centre – will provide logistical and technical support for the installation of the software

Guyana Linux Users Group – will provide support for the installation of the system, and for post installation support.

SEWA will provide ongoing technical and management support for the telecentre. SEWA will add the management of the telecentre to its core activities, and intends to replicate this pilot in other parts of Guyana.

SEWA Personnel

Keeran Persaud : Keeran Persaud has a Diploma in Computer Science and has worked with community projects for SEWA in Guyana.

Omar Bissoon : Omar Bissoon is a Civil Engineer who has experience in providing

Technical support to the project will be provided by UG Computer Centre,

7. Risks and Concerns

1. Timely delivery of support from all partners

The support from the UG Computer Centre has been offered verbally, and has been initiated since the UG CC has allocated temporarily a room for the testing of the terminals and the equipment. The UG CC Counterparts are Mr Rayman Khan who is manager of the Computer Centre

2. Security

The physical security of the equipment is vested in the Cummings Lodge Hindu Society who are investing in preparing the site for the network. The CLHS stores their other assets in the compound.

There are no other known risks at the time of this proposal.

8. Evaluation of project

DevNet will undertake the evaluation of this project by measuring the following :-

- 1) Delivery schedule in the project timetable
- 2) Post project – use of the Community Telecentre, number of users, reasons for usage

End of proposal. 28 August, 2005