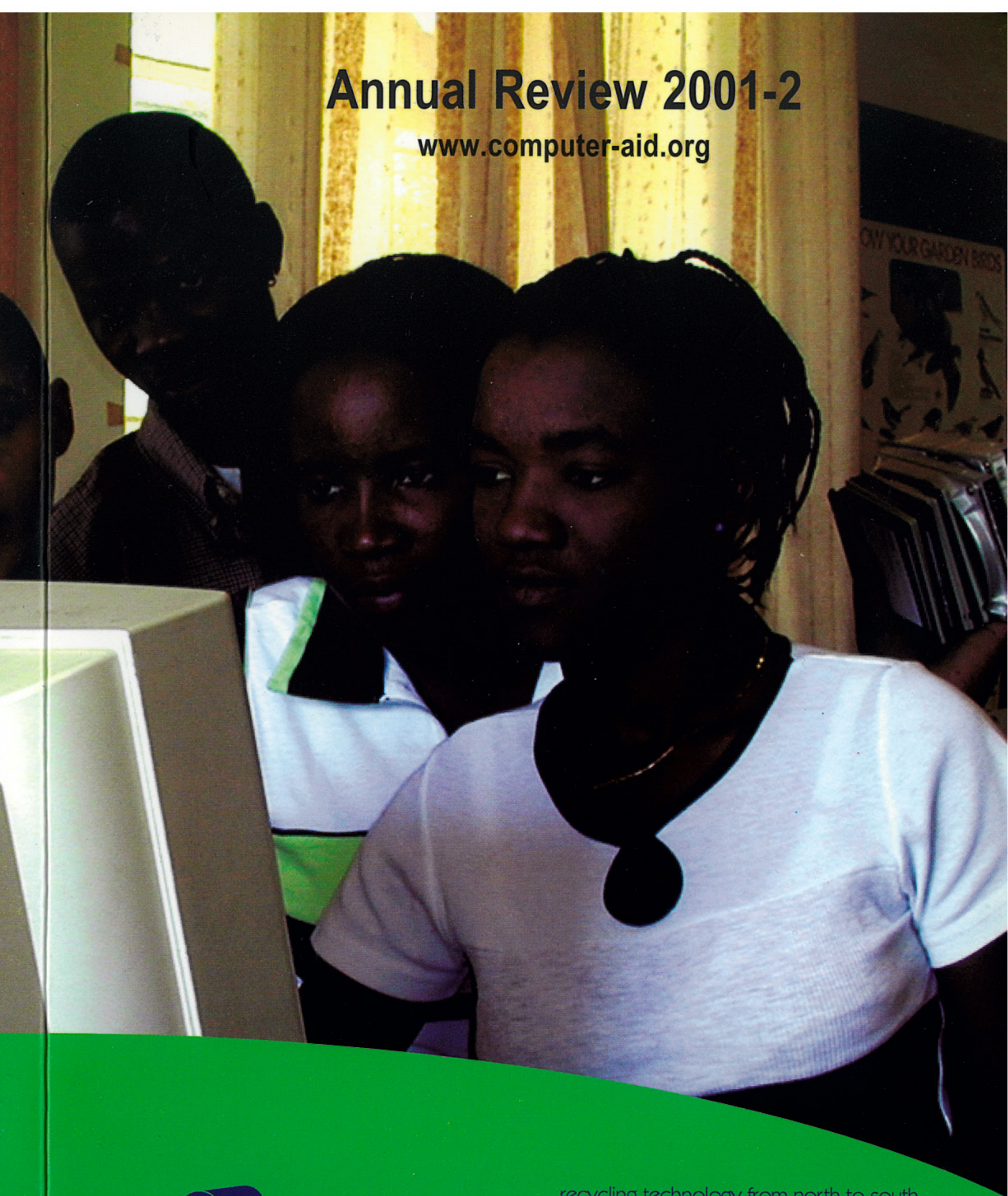


# Annual Review 2001-2

[www.computer-aid.org](http://www.computer-aid.org)



recycling technology from north to south

computer Aid

0101010010001110001110000111101001000110001100110001010101010 international

Computer Aid International is a charity registered in England and Wales (no. 1069256) and a company limited by guarantee (no. 3442679). Computer Aid International refurbishes computers for re-use in schools and community organisations in developing countries.

Computer Aid International was founded by professionals whose experience in the field of international development had made them acutely aware of the enormous un-met demand for inexpensive computer systems in schools and colleges; health centres and community organisations in developing countries.

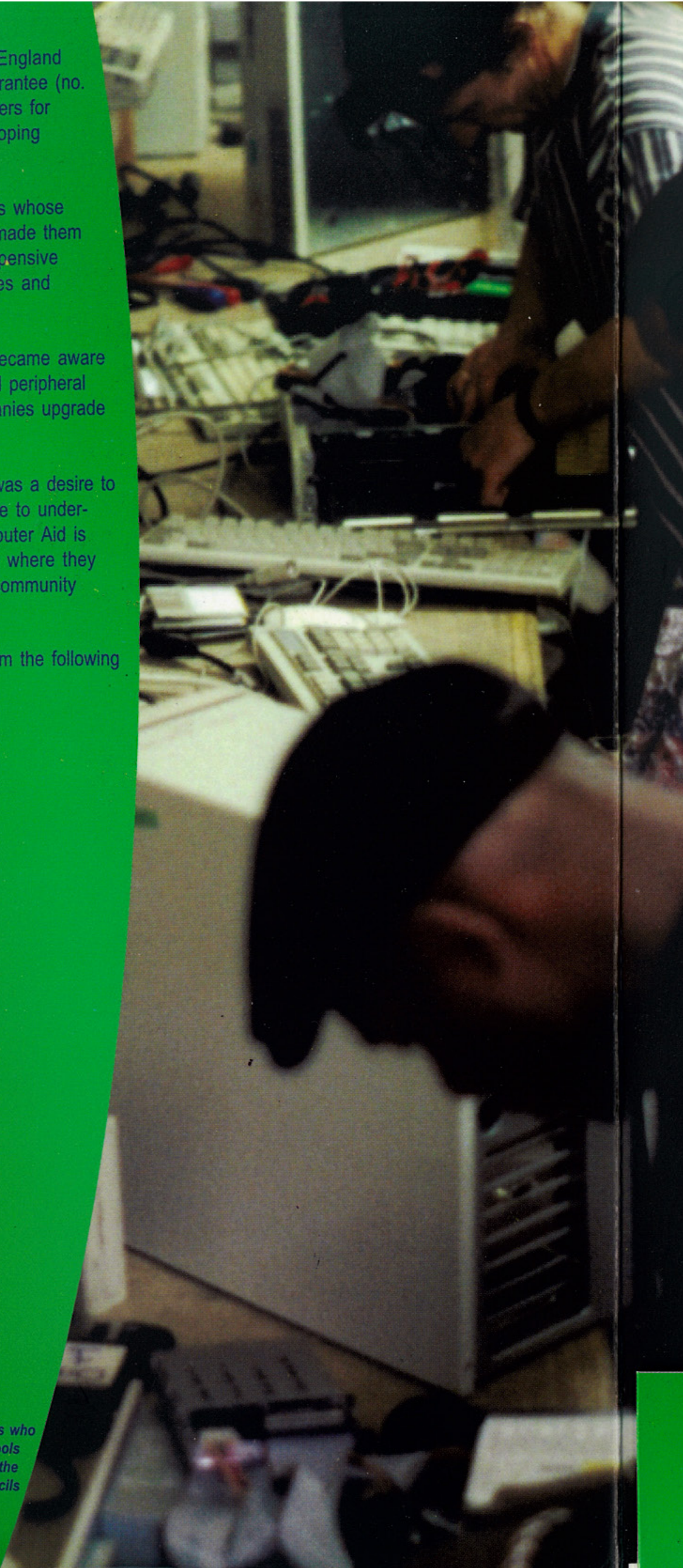
The idea of refurbishing technology took shape as we became aware of the hundreds of thousands of working PCs and related peripheral equipment being routinely discarded in the UK as companies upgrade to the very latest technology.

The driving force behind the formation of Computer Aid was a desire to end this terrible waste. These IT resources are invaluable to under-resourced non-profit organisations. At minimal cost Computer Aid is able to supply fully refurbished quality Pentium systems where they are most needed in developing countries' schools and community organisations.

In the past year we have received generous support from the following trusts and foundations:

Peter Stebbings Memorial Trust  
Walter Guinness Charitable Trust  
Burdens Charitable Foundation  
The Archer Trust  
Jane Hodge Foundation  
The Rufford Foundation  
HDH Wills 1996 Charitable Trust  
Enid Blyton Trust for Children  
The Westcroft Trust  
The Stephen Clark Charitable Trust  
JUST Trust  
Thomas Sivewright Catto Trust  
The Kreitman Foundation  
Rita & David Slowe Charitable Trust  
The Dulverton Trust  
The Angela Gallagher Memorial Fund  
Douglas Charitable Trust  
Allan Charitable Trust  
Southampton Row Trust Ltd  
Loke Wan Tho Memorial Foundation  
John & Susan Bowers Fund  
The Mary Webb Trust  
The Cumber Family Charitable Trust  
Morel Trust  
The Dickon Trust  
The Rhododendron Trust  
WF Southall Trust

*Computer Aid has received support from many hundreds of individuals who have donated towards the provision of quality refurbished PCs to schools and community organisations. We have also received vital support in the form of PC donations from individuals, colleges, NGOs, schools, councils and companies. Many hundreds of schools and community groups in developing countries have benefited from your support.*



# our aims

Computer Aid International's aim is to increase the access of the developing world to computer technology.

- To maximise the volume and quality of recycled computers being re-used overseas
- To increase the number of UK organisations donating their used IT equipment for re-use overseas
- To identify and work with those organisations in recipient countries able to derive maximum value from refurbished computers
- To provide training and work experience in computer repair to people from socially excluded communities in our workshops in the UK.

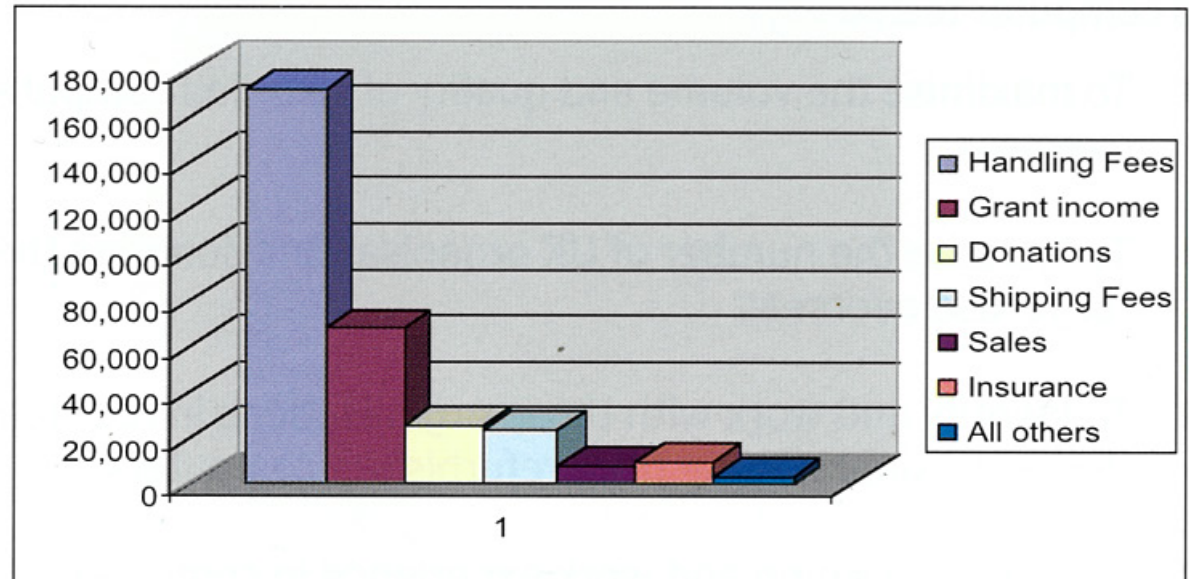


Photo courtesy of Barnabas Foundation, Tirana, Albania

# income & expenditure 2001/2

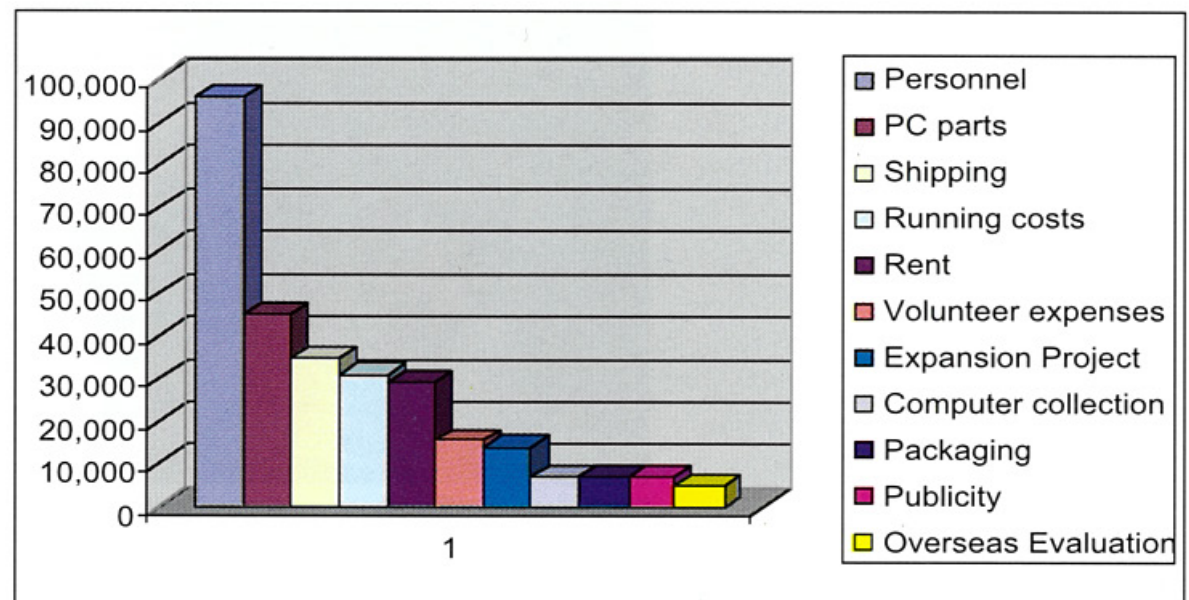
## Income

Total Income £307,749



## Expenditure

Total Expenditure £276,471



All figures shown are provisional. Full audit available on request.

# our achievements

This past year has seen a great deal of activity at Computer Aid International reflecting our internal organisational development, increased processing capacity and burgeoning partnerships with local organisations overseas. The year began with the move of the office from the old address on Seven Sisters Rd to Marlborough Rd.

The move to new larger offices enabled us to accomodate new full-time staff and increase our efficiency in managing our increased activities. In addition to the move to new offices, Computer Aid International, also rented extra workshop space to meet the increasing demand for Pentium PCs from community organisations overseas.

- The extra workshop space enabled the average number of computers being recycled from our workshops to increase, from 270 to 343
- The number of developing countries which have received computers from us has increased from 42 to 64
- Over 900 education institutions and over 700 community organisations have now benefited from Computer Aid computers
- Computer Aid International has developed long-term strategic partnerships with key African Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) enabling more effective and sustained use of ICTs
- There is an average of 33 volunteers per week working in our workshops gaining practical experience of PC maintenance and repair
- Two new full time members of staff recruited
- Income has almost doubled from £152,762 (2000/1) to £303,000 in 2001/2
- Computer Aid has shipped 11,173 PCs since it was officially launched in 1998
- A total of 4,112 PCs have been shipped to developing countries in this financial year alone

# our goals

Computer Aid International's aim is to increase the access of the developing world to computer technology.

Being digitally connected is critical to economic, educational and social advancement for individuals, communities and nations, yet on a national and international level a major disparity exists in the access to and understanding of ICT. Depending on how the challenges associated with this digital divide are addressed, technology and the Internet in particular could act as the great equalizer, or as an accelerator of the growing divide between rich and poorer nations.

To address this digital divide, Computer Aid International refurbishes computers from the UK for re-use in schools and community organisations in developing countries. In so doing, Computer Aid International aims to increase equality of educational opportunity in an environmentally friendly way that reduces global waste and pollution.

Computer Aid International also seeks to ensure that the resources it redistributes contribute positively to social and economic change:

- < targeting supply where the recipients are the poorest and most marginalised people in developing countries;
- < supporting NGO federations working on rights-based issues, challenging corruption, poor service provision and contributing to the economic empowerment of excluded communities.

# planning ahead

At the beginning of 2002 a report was commissioned pro bono from consultants Bain & Co on the feasibility of expansion of Computer Aid International from its current 4,000 (plus) PCs processed per year to approximately 50,000 per year. The report considered the following factors:

- the potential supply of donated PCs in the UK;
- the demand for Computer Aid International PCs in developing countries;
- and what pricing would make Computer Aid International self-financing.

Computer Aid International is seeking to expand its operations significantly over the coming years. Expansion will take the form of a move to new larger premises ( we moved to our current premises in June 2001 and have already outgrown both office and workshop space). The move to new premises would enable recruitment of new staff, an increase in production, resulting in greater number of PCs shipped and increased number of beneficiaries in developing countries.

Due to the new WEEE directive (see overleaf) to be implemented in the UK in 2005, Computer Aid International is uniquely placed to maximise on this major opportunity to deliver quality affordable PCs in volume to marginalised communities across the developing world.

The supply of ICTs would enable the not-for-profit sector in developing countries to address their information, knowledge, networking and communication needs and thereby increase their effectiveness to meet the pressing requirements of their communities.

# meeting challenges

Currently most of our donated computers come from colleges and local government departments, with an increasing number coming from UK businesses. To ensure an increased and sustainable supply of PCs Computer Aid will need to increase the volume sourced from the commercial sector, in particular from large corporates based within the M25 and from PC manufacturers.

It is estimated that more than 1 million used PCs are put into ineffective 'storage' by businesses and consumers each year, largely because they are unsure of the appropriate channels of disposal. A further 1.5 million PCs are disposed of in landfill sites, causing environmental hazard. Only a small number (300,000) of redundant PCs are decommissioned through appropriate channels, namely commercial PC recyclers and refurbishers. Two sets of legislation are increasing the trend towards responsible disposal of PCs:

- *The European Union WEEE (Waste of Electronic and Electrical Equipment) directive is expected to come into effect in 2004 and makes PC manufacturers responsible for collection, reuse and recycling of used PCs. This has huge logistics and cost implications for the industry, in particular reverse logistics, storage, data cleaning and environmentally responsible disposal.*
- *The Data Protection Act makes it a legal requirement to take appropriate security measures against "unauthorised access to, or alteration, disclosure or destruction of, personal data and against accidental loss or destruction of personal data". Businesses are taking their responsibilities for data protection increasingly seriously. They are ensuring data is permanently deleted from their PCs, prior to disposal, in order to minimise any risk of it leaking into the public domain. This is undertaken either through an internal IT department or outsourced to an external PC decommissioning business who typically subject each PC hard drive to a stringent overwriting process such as the Department of Defence standard 5220.22-M.*

Both of these trends, in particular WEEE, over the next few years will have the side effect of encouraging donations to charities as an alternative to costly disposal. Computer Aid is ideally positioned to benefit from these trends, offering a zero or low cost channel for responsible PC disposal and re-use.

# enhancing communication

Between September 2001 and March 2002 Computer Aid International undertook its own research to assess the effective demand for refurbished PCs in developing countries. Computer Aid International met with representatives from governments, educationalists, headmasters, teachers, community leaders, and business leaders from 6 countries in Southern and Eastern Africa. The result of these trips was the realisation that the demand for refurbished PCs is enormous. The handling fee of £39 is not a prohibitive factor – for many the issue is one of access to affordable and quality PCs.

In short Computer Aid International is uniquely placed to maximise on this major opportunity to deliver quality affordable PCs in volume to marginalised communities across the developing world, helping the poorest address their information and communication needs.

Strengthened by the benefits of co-ordinated information flow, the ability to share and exchange knowledge community organisations will be better able to represent the interests of its constituents, namely poor communities. A recent study on the use of ICT conducted by the British Government's Department for International Development (DFID) argues that in the West information flows and communication services are widespread and as such government institutions become more transparent and accountable. For CSOs working in advocacy the improved knowledge sharing and networking facilities offered by ICTs will allow them to lobby government, bilateral and multilateral bodies more effectively for the benefit of their communities.

DFID's study concluded that, 'Properly deployed, ICTs have enormous potential as tools to increase information flows and empower poor people. DFID and other development partners should work closely with developing countries to maximise the contribution of the full range of ICTs to achieving International Development Targets.' An information and knowledge share on issues as varied as human rights, HIV/Aids, Women, health, and environment, between civil society organisations, government, bilateral, multilateral and international aid agencies is key to addressing poverty.

# promoting self-sustainability

## **A new NGO model for self-sustainability**

In partnership with two East African NGO federations Computer Aid International aims to pilot a new NGO model for self-sustainability which has the potential to develop multiple lines of unrestricted core income for the two federations.

## **How will it work?**

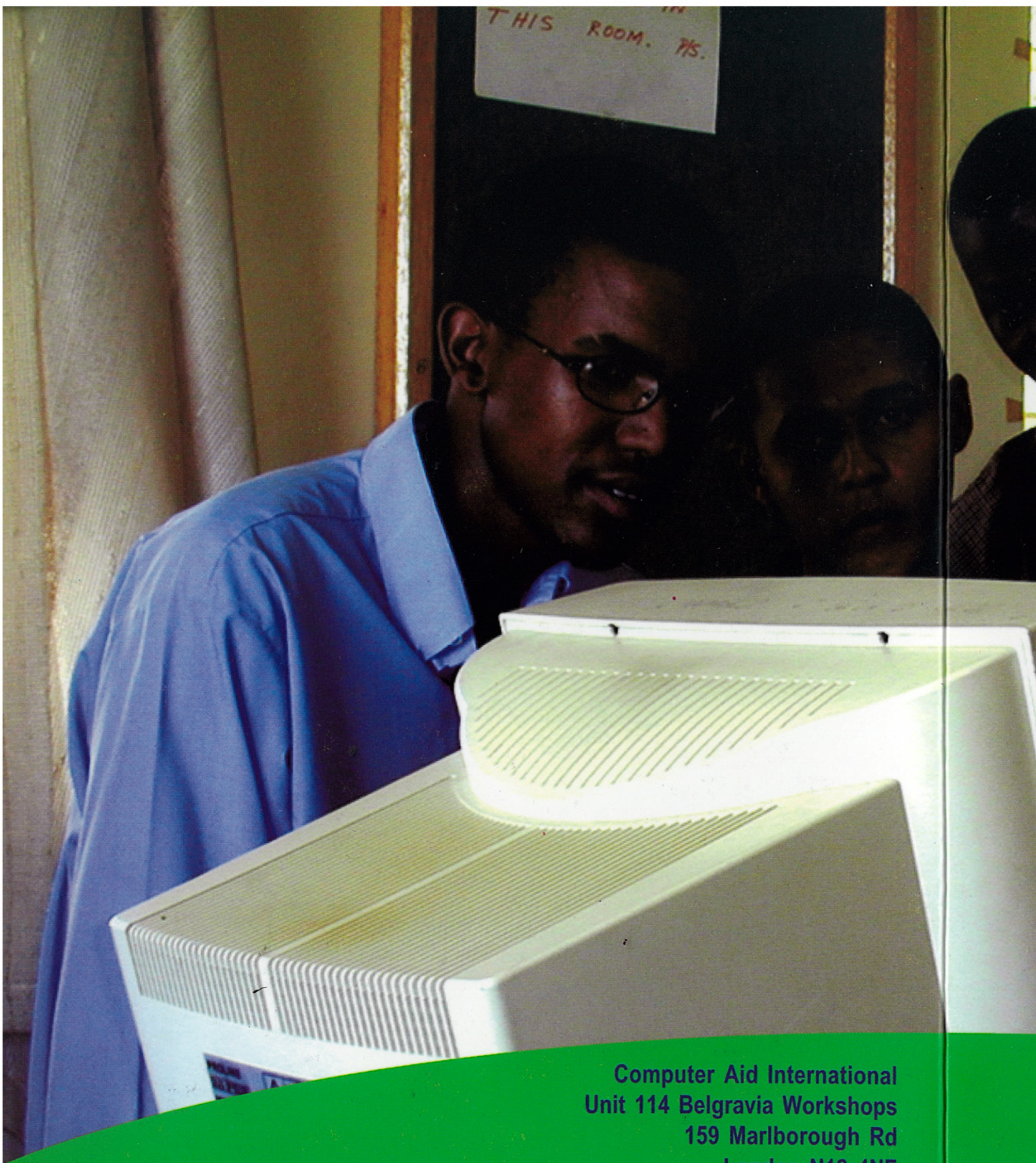
Computer Aid International supplies a full container of (225) fully refurbished Pentiums PCs to an existing national NGO federation. The cost of getting these systems to the freight terminal in the capital inclusive of shipping is approximately £50pst per computer (USD \$70). The NGO Federation supplies computers to its membership at approximately £100pst pound sterling including a one year back-to-base parts and labour warranty provided by the NGO Federation - thus guaranteeing the sustainability of the PCs in development use.

From each £100 PST transaction, £50 PST goes to pay for the next consignment of computers to be shipped in - thus guaranteeing a unending supply of PCs. From each transaction the remaining £50 PST is unrestricted, core income to the Federation. Part of this income will clearly be needed to pay for the technicians' salaries and workspace but in the two East African contexts being explored there is a substantial income remaining over and above these expenses. The computer supply and technical support facility within the NGO federation has the potential to grow into a full scale 'social business' at the heart of the federation with the following income lines:

- supply the most cost efficient Pentium PCs available in the country
- guaranteed technical support by warranty to ensure their sustainable use
- provide computer training at low cost
- provide computers services at low cost (website development, networking etc.)

The computers are supplied within the context of the federation's existing programme of capacity building support to its member organisations following appropriate needs analysis and with training as required. As well as being entirely within the NGO Federation's existing remit of capacity building, the programme holds the potential to build the federation's own capacity and reduce its current donor dependency.





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