



DeltaCultura

Cabo Verde *

Education Center Tarrafal
Data, Pictures & Stories

Annual Report 2025

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ABOUT THIS REPORT

Delta Cultura's Annual Report is now being published in its twelfth edition. The Education Center, which stands at the heart of this report, has been operating since 2004/2005 and remains the core of Delta Cultura's work in Tarrafal. While reporting took different forms in the early years, the annual report has evolved into a key tool for sharing insights into the developments, challenges, and stories that shape the Education Center.

This report summarises the activities of 2025 – through numbers, short narratives, everyday observations, and contributions from staff members and partners. Rather than presenting a collection of dry data, its purpose is to offer a vivid impression of how children and young people learn, grow, and experience community at the Education Center.

We wish you a pleasant reading experience!



The Cape Verde archipelago



The island of Santiago with the town of Tarrafal in the north, where Delta Cultura is located

SITE PLAN OF THE EDUCATION CENTER



OUR VISION : OUR MISSION



VISION

Delta Cultura eliminates poverty through education.

We keep children and young people enthusiastic about learning. By creating emotions that awaken curiosity, we make a significant contribution to self-determined, alert action and contribute to social change.

MISSION

Delta Cultura's core competency is education.

We develop educational activities aimed at creating emotions for the teaching content. This allows us to recognize potential and promote it. To generate emotions, we use tools such as telling stories, asking questions, questioning values and creating challenges.

We form an international knowledge network, to ensure the active involvement of our supervisors and provide the necessary infrastructure.

Through transcultural exchange, we create the basis for mutual understanding and awareness about cultural identities and the topic of migration.

PROJECT MANAGER'S REPORT 2025

by Florian Wegenstein



A year full of challenges, solutions, efforts, progress, and development. In this sense, 2025 has seamlessly integrated into the first 20 years of the Education Center ... or perhaps even into the last 2025 years of world history.

The highlight of the year – also in terms of project management challenges – was certainly the **Education Forum in April 2025**. It is briefly described in this report. A more detailed report is available upon request (please contact us by email).

A major success of the forum was the productive and sustainable collaboration with UNI-CV, specifically with the Faculty of Education and the Faculty of Psychology of the public university. The training programs provided by these institutions for our educators are also described in this report. I am very pleased about this cooperation – and even more so about the many wonderful people I met through it. With several of them, I am in close exchange regarding the further development of the Education Center and the development of the learning village, a process I am working on intensively.

I remain firmly convinced that we can organize education much better – and that we should do so. Our children deserve it.

While I devoted the first months of the year almost entirely to organizing the Education Forum, the daily operations of the Education Center continued to run smoothly. Although the forum initially put us under some financial pressure, we were able to stabilize the situation by the end of May.

The month of July was particularly gratifying. During this period, school holidays are already underway, and children and young people spend the entire day at the Education Center, including lunch.

My joy and enthusiasm grow in proportion to the number of participants at the **Education Center**. And this July marked a peak in that respect. It had been a long time since I had seen so many children and young people at the center. Lively activity wherever one looked.

One might therefore assume that I was highly satisfied with the year 2025. That is true only to a certain extent. My areas of responsibility – securing funding, writing reports, organizing everyday life at the center – have been in my hands for many years now and are increasingly ex-

hausting. I am no longer the youngest either ... I turned 60 in October.

However, it is not my motivation in general that is declining with age. Quite the opposite. My motivation to realize my ideas for the learning village remains undiminished. What I find challenging is being consumed by everyday routines. Daily life has a particularly voracious way of doing that.

Whenever possible, I take time away from the Education Center and focus on developing my educational ideas. In this context, I must mention the book I have been writing for nearly two years now. It is my first book – and it will be a bestseller. That much is certain. It reflects my life and, in a way, the path that led me to the educational ideas I hold today. These ideas did not emerge out of nothing. My experiences, knowledge, culture, and many other influences have shaped them. That is what this book is about.

I am currently in the final phase of revision. What comes next, I do not know yet. I have no experience with publishing houses or self-publishing and will seek support in this process.

When I speak of developing my educational ideas and the learning village, I am also referring very specifically to the development of my own understanding of education. What must education look like if we want to guide creative, critically thinking children and young people who question values toward freedom? Unfortunately, there is no quick or simple answer to this question, and in my view, our success so far has been rather limited.

I have given this development the name “**Bildung 27**.” On the one hand, because 27 is my favorite number – and on the other, because it currently seems realistic that this learning village will open its doors in 2027. This is not an entirely new project, but rather a consistent further development of the existing Education Center.

In this spirit, I welcome ideas and feedback on this report, on educational concepts, and on all relevant topics related to education. May my email inbox overflow with good ideas. ■

Florian Wegenstein

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EDUCATION CENTER



THE DELTA CULTURA EDUCATION CENTER

A safe space. A space for encounters.

A space where children and young people can unfold their potential.

Since its opening in 2004, the Delta Cultura Education Center has been a place that offers children and young people new perspectives – regardless of their social background, their academic abilities, or the challenges of their daily lives. The goals of the Center have remained constant over the years and are continuously refined through new insights and experiences.

OUR GOALS

At the heart of our work lies the empowerment of each individual child and young person. The main objectives are:

- Promoting emotions that spark interest and enthusiasm
- Strengthening self-confidence and social skills
- Fostering creativity, critical thinking, and intrinsic motivation
- Improving academic performance

All of this takes place in an environment that creates safety, trust, and a sense of belonging.

ESTABLISHED FRAMEWORK CONDITIONS (SINCE 2004)

1. The Education Center – a safe space

The Center offers not only physical protection but also emotional security. Here, children can make mistakes, try new things, and express themselves freely. Our work is based on:

- a focus on strengths rather than weaknesses
- stories and experiences that evoke emotions
- the targeted promotion of individual talents
- accepting mistakes as a natural part of the learning process

2. A space for social encounters

At the Education Center, children, young people, staff members, and visitors meet at eye level. The traditional teacher-student relationship is intentionally replaced by an atmosphere of trust, respect, and shared creation.

EDUCATION CENTER

3. Creating positive memories

Positive experiences are essential for the mental health and development of young people. Through shared activities, rituals, projects, and celebrations, memories are formed that strengthen self-confidence and provide orientation.

4. Free access to information

Free internet access, computer classes, and media literacy workshops give children and young people access to knowledge beyond the school curriculum. They acquire skills that are indispensable in the digital age.

5. Support in learning the Portuguese language

Because Portuguese is required in school but rarely taught as a foreign language, the Education Center plays an important role in closing this gap. Especially in the kindergarten, the Portuguese coordinator is central: through playful activities and daily linguistic interaction, children learn Portuguese naturally – without school pressure and in a familiar environment.

SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC SITUATION OF THE PARTICIPANTS

Delta Cultura focuses on children and young people from difficult social and economic backgrounds. At the same time, the organisation excludes no one, regardless of origin, religion, or social background. Attention is paid to a balanced gender distribution.

Many children and young people in Tarrafal face complex challenges. Family structures are often unstable: many parents work abroad, while children grow up with grandparents, other relatives, friends, or neighbours.

Violence is a common educational practice in many families and also occurs in some school environments. This weakens children's trust in the education system and negatively affects their motivation to learn.

In addition, the nutritional situation is often inadequate. Many children eat only once a day; breakfast frequently consists of leftovers from the previous day, and a warm midday meal is often missing.

At the same time, there are hardly any free leisure activities for children and young people. The few existing offers are usually fee-based and therefore inaccessible to many families.



EDUCATION CENTER



ACTIVITIES 2025

In 2025, the Education Center offered a broad variety of activities combining education, creativity, sports, culture, and emotional support:

- Kindergarten
- School support in the form of homework help and tutoring
- Educational games on and off the football field (Football 3 tournaments, etc.)
- Psychological support for children and counselling for parents
- Football training
- Computer science classes as well as free internet access for research purposes
- Language classes (English, French)
- Art classes
- Sewing course

- Music: drum classes
- Dance classes
- Slackline training
- Holiday programme
- Educational, sports, and cultural events
- Batuco – traditional drumming, singing, and dance form performed by women
- Tree nursery

For each activity, a short report is available, prepared either by the responsible staff members or by the project leader, depending on the area.

The Education Center remains a place where young people not only learn but grow – a space that encourages courage, awakens talents, and opens pathways towards a self-determined future.



TEAM



Bottom row from left to right:

Pilika (Head of the tree nursery, since 2023), **Idalena** with daughter Helena (Educator / Administration, since 2023), **Jassica** (Kindergarten educator, since 2011), **Kutxinha** (Educator, football coach, since 2009), **Carina** (Educator, football coach, since 2023), **Suzete** (IT educator, since 2010), **Marcia** (Psychologist, since 2025), **Manuela** with daughter Maya (Administration, since 2023), **Gelsy** (Kindergarten educator, since 2024)

Top row from left to right:

Bruno (IT educator, football coach, since 2024), **Denis** (Slackline trainer, since 2023), **Elias** (Music teacher, since 2023), **Florian** (Founder, Project Manager, since 2004), **Keven** (Driver, caretaker, since 2024), **Samir** (Educator, since 2011), **Domingos** (Gardener, since 2025), **Nene** (Educator, football coach, since 2004)

In 2025, there were some changes within the Delta Cultura team. In May, **Gilson** and **Katia** left the organisation. Delta Cultura took this as an opportunity to review its internal structures and strategically reorganise in order to free up financial resources for the employment of a psychologist. **Marcia** was hired in October as part of this process.

Apart from these adjustments, the Delta Cultura team remained stable. At the end of the year, a total of 23 staff

members were employed, including 13 women and 10 men.

Two guards and one cleaning staff member are not included in the team photos. One guard and the cleaning staff member are funded by the municipality.

Unfortunately, it was not possible to take a team photo with all staff members. The following team members are missing from the photo:



Marisa
(Founder, Cultural Director, Administration, since 2004)



Margarida
(Kindergarten Coordinator, since 2023)



Uzy
(Dance teacher, since 2023)



Mai
(Cook, since 2016)

STORIES WORTH TELLING

WASHING THE DISHES

(told by Idalena – kindergarten educator)

When I was seven months pregnant, one day Izac (5 years old) came to me and placed his ear on my belly.

“Idalena, the baby is washing dishes right now.”



RWANA AND ART

(told by Kutxinha – educator and football coach)

I was studying with Rwana (13 years old) for her art test. She had to draw squares, circles, and other geometric shapes and did so very reluctantly when Florian, the project manager, entered the room. He looked at what Rwana was doing.

“Is that for a maths test?” he asked.

When Rwana corrected him, Florian noticed a drawing on the other side of her notebook.

“Did you draw that?”

“Yes,” Rwana replied, proudly and enthusiastically showing him other drawings she had made.

TAISSA, THE BAG MAKER

(told by Suzete – educator, IT and arts)

Taissa (9 years old) sewed a bag under my guidance. A few days after she took it home, she told me that many children at school had asked her about the bag and wanted one like it.

“A family friend told my mother that they absolutely have to buy me a sewing machine because I have talent.”

Unfortunately, her mother does not have the financial means to fulfil this wish.



EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION



KINDERGARTEN AT THE EDUCATION CENTER

by Margarida Vicente (Kindergarten Coordinator)

The Delta Cultura Kindergarten has one central goal: to be a place of love and care, where every child feels safe and cherished every day. It is a protected space where children can play, explore, grow at their own rhythm, and learn without fear of making mistakes. A place where each child can simply be a child and grow accordingly.

In our kindergarten, the children's voices are heard and valued. The children take an active role in their development and learning: they decide what they want to do, where they want to play, which activities to join, and what they want to learn. Over the course of this year, we developed several projects that arose entirely from their interests – topics such as butterflies, turtles, hygiene, behavior, and more. We believe that learning becomes more meaningful when children are involved in every step of the process. Direct participation sparks curiosity, strengthens autonomy, and turns every discovery into something truly theirs – individually and as a group.

Throughout this year, through various strategies, close observation, and attentive care, we have also seen the group become more cohesive, participative, and empathetic. The children have learned to relate to one another more consciously and now show greater care for their friends: they try to talk during conflicts, express their feelings more clearly, play together, and share more easily. These signs show significant growth and confirm the positive impact of the strategies we implemented.

Free play is also one of the core pillars of our educational approach. For us, play is the natural language of childhood: through spontaneous play, children explore the world, express emotions, build relationships, develop skills, and discover who they are. By giving them time and space for free play, we respect each child's inner rhythm and value their creativity, curiosity, and problem-solving abilities. Play is not just leisure – it is a fundamental tool for every child's development.

EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION

Thus, we can affirm that our kindergarten is a very rich learning environment on all levels. It is also a place of safety, love, and growth, where children have daily opportunities to learn, play, socialize, and develop in a secure and healthy way. The children are heard every day, and from their contributions we build our routine together and learn collectively.

More than a kindergarten, we are a place where children can be themselves, discover the world, and feel truly welcomed – without fear of being children, and with the chance to live their childhood in its full beauty. ■



SCHOOL SUPPORT

Homework support and tutoring are among the most ambivalent services offered by the Education Center. For a large proportion of parents and guardians, they are the main reason for sending their children to the center. For many children, however, these activities are among the least popular. This is understandable, as they already spend around six hours per day at school.

Nevertheless, the educators at the Education Center strive to encourage all children and young people to do at least as much schoolwork as necessary to meet basic academic requirements.

The attitude of parents and guardians is understandable: they wish for their children to have a better life than they themselves had or have. For many, the only perceived path out of poverty leads through school and, later, through university education.

At the same time, experience shows that children and young people from the social backgrounds with which Delta Cultura works rarely succeed in completing a university degree. Many attempt this path but fail due to financial constraints or additional social, family-related, and personal challenges.

Especially in the case of primary school children, the educators pay close and consistent attention to ensuring that homework is completed regularly. Every day, the classroom is filled with children learning to write and calculate, with varying levels of concentration. When attention begins to fade, structured movement breaks are introduced: the children go outside to play and then return with renewed – though often short-lived – concentration.

Tutoring is provided to all adolescents who experience difficulties at school and are willing to actively address them, as well as to those who wish to learn out of personal interest.

Overall, Delta Cultura follows an expanded educational approach. In addition to academic support and the promotion of formal educational pathways, practical skills, psychosocial stability, self-efficacy, and realistic future perspectives are strengthened. The aim is to open up multiple viable pathways for children and young people. Education is therefore not understood as a linear process, but as an individual developmental journey that takes into account different abilities, life realities, and learning paces.



**"I HAVE A CELEBRATION
AT SCHOOL, BUT I AM SAD
BECAUSE I HAVE TO WEAR
A UNIFORM AND CAN'T
DRESS NICELY."**

(Chris)



LEARNING ACCESS



EDUCATIONAL GAMES

Learning games are a central component of the educational work at the center. Learning is not understood as a separate or formal process, but as something that naturally takes place through play, movement, and social interaction.



One example of this approach is Football 3, a game format in which the result is not the primary focus. Instead, values such as fair play, teamwork, gender equality, respect, and shared decision-making are emphasized. Children help shape the rules, reflect on their behaviour, and take responsibility – skills that extend far beyond sport.

In general, Delta Cultura follows the conviction that every game is a learning space. Through play, children develop social skills, emotional self-regulation, creativity, and problem-solving abilities – often more sustainably than in highly guided learning settings.

The consciousness researcher Christof Koch has pointed out in public discussions that children today have fewer opportunities for self-directed, free play and learning and sees a possible link between this development and the increasing mental health challenges faced by children and adolescents.

This is precisely where the Education Center comes in: it offers children a protected environment in which they can play freely, experiment, fail, negotiate, and learn – without performance pressure, but with reliable support in the background. ■

PSYCHOLOGICAL SUPPORT AT DELTA CULTURA

by Marcia (psychologist at the Education Center)



The Education Center continuously develops its programmes in order to provide the best possible support for children and young people. In Cabo Verde, psychological distress among young people has been increasing in recent years, intensified by the emigration of parents and caregivers, which leaves many children emotionally unsettled.

Against this background, Delta Cultura has employed a psychologist. Below is her report on her first months at the Education Center:

This report summarizes the psychological activities carried out at the Delta Cultura Education Center. The main objective of this work is to promote the emotional health and well-being of children and adolescents through prevention, psychological support, and close cooperation with families and schools.

A central component is the emotional education program in the kindergarten. In weekly sessions, basic emotions such as joy, sadness, and anger are addressed in an age-appropriate way. Through stories, games, and creative activities, children learn to recognize, name, and develop initial strategies for dealing with emotions.

The high level of participation shows that children engage well with the content and are able to recall topics from previous sessions. Age differences within the group support peer learning. Emotional education is understood as a long-term developmental process that fosters self-confidence, autonomy, and social skills.

In addition, individual and group psychological support sessions were provided for children, adolescents, parents, and staff members in order to address individual emotional needs. During the reporting period, a total of 13 individual counseling sessions were conducted, which participants experienced as supportive and relieving.

Another important focus was working with parents and guardians. In regular meetings, topics such as parental stress management, emotional role modeling, and non-violent parenting are reflected upon. Parents showed openness, self-reflection, and a high level of satisfaction with their children's development at the center.

Cooperation with schools aimed at the early identification of learning and developmental difficulties. In specific



cases, individualized support measures were prepared together with teachers and the school psychologist to prevent academic failure and emotional distress.

In addition, open discussion groups with adolescents were held, addressing topics such as puberty, self-esteem, anxiety, conflict resolution, bullying, and emotional intelligence. Digital media and interactive formats supported active participation.

Overall, the psychological work makes a substantial contribution to the holistic development of children and adolescents and strengthens the connection between the Education Center, families, and schools. ■

STORIES WORTH TELLING

SUELY AND HER NERVOUSNESS

(told by Kutxinha – educator and football coach)

Suely is now 14 years old and has been part of the Education Center for many years. She loves playing football and has progressed through all age groups, starting in U7 and playing with the boys until U13.

She then moved on to the older girls and began training with adult women at the age of 14, as there were not enough players for the U17 team.

During a preparatory match for the regional championship, I substituted her in for the first time as a central defender. She was clearly very nervous and initially did not want to enter the field. She is a very quiet and shy girl.

Edza (16 years old), who was already playing as a central defender, noticed Suely's nervousness and said to her:

"Suely, you don't have to be afraid. Play like you always do, and if you make a mistake, I'll be there to fix it."



The two became a solid defensive pair and played the entire regional championship together. This allowed the team to qualify for the national championship, where Suely played every match from start to finish at just 14 years of age, receiving much praise from players of other teams.

ELTON AND THE MILITARY SCHOOL

(told by Kutxinha – educator and football coach)

I sat down with Elton (17 years old), and he told me his story:

"I went to school in Tarrafal until my mother emigrated. Since there were many underage children living in our house, my mother sent me to a military school. She said everything there was free and that the military would take care of me.

But I didn't like it at all. There were far too many punishments, sometimes even collective punishments for things I hadn't done.

I then returned to my siblings and decided to work. The only job I could find was in construction, which was very exhausting. I also had no time left for other activities, like playing football. Every evening I came home completely exhausted.



Now I've decided that next year I will go back to school, even if I don't pass, or start some kind of vocational training. But I also want time for the things I enjoy."



FOOTBALL TRAINING AT THE EDUCATION CENTER

Football training marks the origin of Delta Cultura's work and remains one of the central activities of the Education Center to this day. From the very beginning, the focus was not on training professional football players, but on using football as a pedagogical and social instrument. This approach continues to shape the football programme today: **football is understood as a means of fostering personal development, social learning, and educational processes** – and it is also the reason why the FIFA Foundation has been continuously supporting Delta Cultura since 2007.

For many boys in particular, football training remains the most attractive offer of the Education Center. Not only the training sessions themselves, but also the matches at weekends have a strong appeal and represent an important social highlight for many children and young people. Football creates a sense of belonging, structure, and motivation, while at the same time providing access to children and adolescents who are often difficult to reach through more traditional educational activities.

Delta Cultura's football programme is broadly structured and includes the following age and performance groups:

U7, U9, U11, U13 (mixed – boys and girls), U15, U17, U19 (men), U17 (women), as well as a women's and a men's team.

The men's, women's, U19 and U17 men's teams participate in championships organised by the football association. For all younger age groups, Delta Cultura independently organises matches, friendly games, and tournaments in order to ensure regular playing opportunities for the children.

Delta Cultura has also played a key role in the development of women's football on the island of Santiago. In the early years, mixed training sessions with boys and girls were sometimes met with resistance. Today, the participation of girls in football training is taken for granted and firmly established in everyday club life – a change that is significant not only in sporting terms, but also socially.

SPORTS



Especially at a young age, football is an effective means of building a long-term connection between children and the Education Center. Through training, relationships, trust, and reliability are established. These form the basis for gradually involving children in other activities offered by the center – such as school support, learning games, psychosocial support, or cultural activities. Football thus serves as an entry point and bridge to broader educational and developmental opportunities.

In everyday training, aspects such as reliability, conflict resolution, self-discipline, and mutual support are consciously addressed. Victories and defeats are reflected on together, and great importance is placed on ensuring that all children – regardless of talent or performance – remain part of the group. The football field thus becomes a learning space in which social skills are just as important as athletic abilities.

In summary, football training is far more than a sporting activity. It is a central pedagogical tool of Delta Cultura, providing children and young people with orientation, community, and perspectives, and making a decisive contribution to their sustained participation in educational processes. ■

PEOPLE FROM DELTA CULTURA



FOOTBALL EXPERT NENE (Fernando Lopes Tavares)

Nene, whose full name is Fernando Lopes Tavares, was born in 1985 in the small mountain village of Mato Mendes in the municipality of Tarrafal. “To this day, there is hardly any infrastructure there,” he explains. His father, a government employee working in road construction, met Nene’s mother there. They had two children – Nene and an older sister. When Nene was six months old, his father passed away.

He spent his first school years in this mountain village. After the death of her aunt, his mother gradually moved to Tarrafal, where she finally settled in 1997. There, she found work with an Italian company that built a sewage system with a wastewater treatment plant in Tarrafal. When Nene was fifteen years old, she fell ill with a foot problem and could no longer work. As she was the sole provider for the family, Nene had to drop out of school and take over her job.

Later, he worked in a building materials store. During this time, he spent a lot of time with João Cláudio, the son of Marisa, the founder of Delta Cultura. He observed Florian leading football training sessions for a long time



but did not dare to ask whether he could help. “One day I asked João Cláudio to ask Florian. I was too shy to do it myself. I remember it exactly: it was a Tuesday when he came to me and said I could start on Thursday. I was overjoyed.”

At the end of 2004, when the financing of the education center had just been secured, Florian showed him the future site for the first time. “I still remember exactly how emotional that moment was.”

The construction was under great pressure. A strict schedule had to be followed. However, the municipality’s

PEOPLE FROM DELTA CULTURA



construction machines did not care about that schedule. They stood around broken, and the land could not be surveyed.

“The area was full of acacia trees, and the municipality could not help to ‘clear’ the land. So we cleaned everything ourselves with the U13 and U15 boys – that was my first job for the center.”

After that, Nene helped with the production of clay tiles, which are still used today in the office building and the classroom. “With the support of a specialist from Austria, we built a clay kiln, used trees and bushes as fuel, and fired the tiles together.”

But football has remained Nene’s great passion. Over the years, Delta Cultura organized several coaching courses – among others with Didi Constantini, who shortly after his stay in Tarrafal became head coach of the Austrian national team, as well as with coaches from Austria, Switzerland, and Germany. “I learned a lot in these courses, but most of all through conversations with Florian and through observation. Today I know how important a clear playing philosophy is. Training sessions must be designed according to this philosophy.”

Nene has had a lasting impact on youth football in the region. On his initiative, youth tournaments were established in Tarrafal and Calheta, which are now organized by the municipalities themselves – Delta Cultura naturally participates with all age groups.

To this day, Nene manages the entire football program of the education center together with Kutxinha, supported by Carina and Bruno. “The center is like my second home – even more so since my wife and my two children emigrated to Portugal a year ago. The boys have been with me at the center almost every day since their birth. I miss them very much.”

The topic of emigration plays a major role in Nene’s life in many ways. Not only because his family lives abroad, but also because every year he has built new football teams that repeatedly fall apart when young people emigrate –

especially in recent years, when Portugal was looking for many workers and issued visas generously. “Of course that affected me. But emigration is not an option for me. Since I took part in the FIFA Festival in Brazil in 2014, I know that after just a few days away from home I develop strong homesickness. Even two weeks on a neighboring island are difficult for me.”

Today, Nene’s expertise is recognized far beyond the center. He has received offers from teams in Boavista, Praia, and Tarrafal. “But I am not just a coach of Delta Cultura – I am Delta Cultura.”

With the men’s team, he has achieved great progress. After years in the second division, Delta Cultura has now been playing in the top league for three years and regularly competes for the title. “Having to build a new team every year has not demotivated me. It is the reality here – and I see it as a challenge.”

Even though it is not Delta Cultura’s primary goal to train professional football players, Nene is happy about every person who manages to do so.

“So far, none of our players has made it into the highest European league. There are several reasons for that, but there are always players who were with us as children or teenagers and who now play football in Europe or elsewhere in the world. One of the best examples is Diney Borges. He was at our football school until he was twelve years old. Then he emigrated to Portugal with his parents. Today he plays football in Saudi Arabia and has just qualified for the World Cup with the Cape Verde national team.”

When Nene talks about Edlene, whose story is also told in this report, he becomes enthusiastic. He was her coach for many years. “I wish her that she will find her path in football. Women’s football in Europe is growing.”

Nene’s story shows how deeply rooted Delta Cultura is in the lives of many people in Tarrafal – and how much a single person can shape the development of an entire community. ■

STORIES WORTH TELLING



ADRIEL AND THE SOFT PENCIL

(told by Kutxinha – educator and football coach)

Adriel started school this year. In his first week, he already had a lot of homework and had to fill an entire page with different lines. Eventually, he became tired, put his pencil aside, and said:

“The pencil has become too soft. I have to wait until it gets hard again.”

BEST FRIENDS NIVALDO AND RONILSON

(told by Jassica – kindergarten educator)

Nivaldo and Ronilson (both 5 years old) are best friends. They both live very close to the Education Center. Nivaldo often picks Ronilson up from home and they come to kindergarten together.

It has happened that when Ronilson was ill and couldn't come to kindergarten, Nivaldo stayed at his house, as he said, to help Ronilson get better faster.

One morning, Ronilson's mother called me and said he couldn't come because she had no snack for him. Unfortunately, some mothers feel ashamed to send their children to kindergarten without a snack.

When we were sitting together with all the children in our morning circle, Ronilson and



Nivaldo suddenly appeared at the door, and Nivaldo explained:

“Today I'm sharing my snack with Ronilson.”



ISAQUEL AND SKIN COLOUR

(told by Margarida – kindergarten coordinator)

I sat with Isaque (5 years old), and we talked about skin colour. We agreed that I have light-brown skin and he has dark-brown skin, and that I am not white.

Shortly afterwards, he explained to me: “Your skin has already woken up. Mine is still in the middle of the night.”

THE COMPUTER ROOM AT THE EDUCATION CENTER

by Suzete and Bruno (IT facilitators)

The computer room is an exceptionally popular place among the children and young people at the Education Center. There is never any need to motivate them – they come to class with joy, curiosity, and enthusiasm. Even the “free” hours are used eagerly, especially for research and personal projects.

We deliberately give the children freedom to explore technology and try new things, while ensuring that an educator is always present in the room. Social media is not forbidden, but it is rarely used on the computers – YouTube is the most common exception.

For organizational reasons, the classes are divided into age groups, similar to the football training structure. This results in different levels of digital knowledge within each group, but it greatly encourages collaboration. Children and young people who already have more experience share their knowledge willingly and explain the “secrets of computing” to those who are still learning.

Because of this, the computer room always maintains an atmosphere of friendship, respect, and trust – both between the participants and us facilitators, as well as among the children themselves.

A major highlight this year was the Canva course we offered. This design program naturally inspires creativity and invites the students to create their own projects. The children and young people learned to design invitations, presentations, and covers for school assignments, as well as posters - including the ones they created to promote their football matches on the weekends. The photo shows one of the works that regularly appear on Delta Cultura's social media pages.

Another important area is the exploration of artificial intelligence. Most children already know ChatGPT, and they are frequently surprised by the many possibilities this technology offers. Many use it creatively, including to get explanations for school content they did not fully understand in class.

The computer room is therefore much more than just a place for learning: it is a space where children and young people develop self-confidence, discover their creativity, and experience how knowledge can be shared and built together. Here, they realize that their abilities are growing – and that the digital world can open new doors for them.



LANGUAGE CLASSES

Language classes in English and French are part of the Education Center's programme, but at the same time represents one of its more challenging areas. Participation is voluntary and therefore limited, which is also related to the children's particular relationship with these languages.

Many children and young people already learn English and French in public school. However, the focus there is usually on writing, grammar, and exams, rather than on speaking and practical language use. As a result, these languages are often perceived as a school obligation rather than as meaningful tools for communication, participation, or future opportunities.

Delta Cultura is fully aware of the central importance of language for education, self-efficacy, and social participation. At the same time, practical experience shows that it has not yet been sufficiently possible to convey the relevance and concrete usefulness of foreign languages to the children in a sustainable way. Consequently, motivation among many children remains limited.

Language classes therefore take place, but are deliberately understood as a field for further development. The aim is to find new approaches that connect language

more closely with everyday life, interests, movement, play, exchange, and real-life situations. Only when language is experienced as lively and relevant can sustainable learning occur.

The expansion of this area is planned, but requires the development of suitable didactic approaches that take the children's life realities and motivation seriously. ■



**"DELTA IS A PLACE
WHERE I MEET ALL
KINDS OF PEOPLE."**

(Noemy)



CREATIVE EDUCATION



THE ART SPACE AT THE EDUCATION CENTER

Report by Kutxinha (educator and football coach, at Delta Cultura since 2009)



My work in the Art Space began when Gilson left Delta Cultura in April 2025. We had no one to take over this area, but we were determined to continue because many children and young people love this space.

I volunteered to take on the task, but I did not want to manage it alone because I already have many other responsibilities that I could not and did not want to give up. Therefore, we decided that Carina and I would alternate.

I took over the Art Space without really knowing what activities I should offer. The only clear guidance came from the project leader, Florian: *“We should become more creative in the Art Space and not keep offering the same things.”*

To find new ideas, I watched different videos online and tried to recreate the crafts I saw. Whenever I succeeded, I showed them to the children. In this way, they learned many new things – sometimes challenging, but

CREATIVE EDUCATION

motivating. Their interest grew, and soon they started searching for their own craft ideas.

That is why I began bringing a tablet into the Art Space, so the children could choose independently what they wanted to create.

Since then, interest in the Art Space has grown significantly. The children do many different things, work creatively, and learn to use materials consciously. A valuable side effect is the reuse of waste materials: plastic bottles, packaging, and other items are turned into new, beautiful, and useful objects.

Today I enjoy working in the Art Space and love seeing the children's excitement when they create something new.



CREATIVE EDUCATION



SEWING COURSE

The sewing course is now in its second year and has developed into a very successful activity. The purchase of the sewing machine proved to be an excellent and sustainable investment.

The course is not taught by professional seamstresses, but by Suzete, the computer science teacher, and Margarida, the kindergarten coordinator. Classes take place twice a week: Suzete teaches in the morning, Margarida in the afternoon. Despite not having a professional background in tailoring, both manage to convey basic sewing skills in a practical and motivating way.

A particularly large number of girls participate enthusiastically in the sewing course. One of the main reasons is that tangible results become visible very quickly. The children create bags, hats, skirts, and other items of clothing and can immediately experience the success of their own work.

The sewing course is therefore a good example of how children can be motivated: they remain engaged when they are able to create something they can hold, use, and proudly present. At the same time, manual skills, perseverance, self-confidence, and creativity are fostered – competencies that extend far beyond the course itself. ■



**"DELTA IS A PLACE
I NEVER GET TIRED
OF COMING TO."**

(Loriane)



CREATIVE EDUCATION



MUSIC CLASSES

Music classes have been an important yet challenging component of Delta Cultura's educational work for many years. While the expansion of this area has been successful at times, it has repeatedly been slowed down by structural setbacks – particularly the departure of suitable teachers or personnel decisions in which pedagogical suitability later proved to be insufficient.

Currently, music instruction is carried primarily by Elias, a very musical young person who plays guitar, piano, and drums. His close relationship with the children and young people has positive effects on the interpersonal level, but at the same time makes it more difficult to clearly define the roles of teacher and learner. As a result, lessons sometimes lack the necessary structure and authority.

Many children begin learning an instrument with great curiosity – especially guitar or piano – but stop again after some time. An exception is drum instruction, which has met with sustained interest among several children and is attended regularly. This clearly shows how important motivation, clear guidance, and the immediate experience of progress are.

Delta Cultura attaches great importance to music education. Neuroscientific research demonstrates that active

music-making activates a particularly large number of brain regions simultaneously and that learning music strongly supports cognitive, emotional, and social development. Accordingly, continuous efforts are being made to further develop this area.

A key next step is the recruitment of a suitable coordinator for the music programme. Elias is continuously working as a teacher but requires professional and pedagogical guidance. Implementing this step is also a financial issue, as employing a qualified specialist requires additional resources.

In parallel, efforts are being made to make music more visible and tangible – for example through performances, small concerts, or joint events. These provide children with a concrete reason to learn an instrument and an opportunity to present their progress.

Choral work has also repeatedly had a place in the Education Center. In recent years, however, this area has been weakened by strong migration movements and staff turnover. The aim is to stabilise and further develop this part of the music programme over the long term. ■

CREATIVE EDUCATION



DANCE CLASSES

Dance classes have been an integral part of the Education Center's programme for two years and are led by Uzy. They are very popular, particularly among girls, and are among the consistently attended activities of the center. Classes take place twice a week.

In addition to regular training, Uzy works with the dancers to develop choreographies that are performed on various occasions. These performances take place both at events held at the Education Center and at public events organised by the municipality. Most recently, the dancers presented their work on June 1st, Children's Day, at the municipal event venue in Tarrafal.

Dance classes combine movement, music, and expression, offering children and young people a space to develop creativity, body awareness, and self-confidence. At the same time, rehearsing choreographies together strengthens teamwork, reliability, and mutual support.

From a neuroscientific perspective, dance also holds particular significance. Dancing simultaneously activates motor, emotional, cognitive, and social brain processes and promotes coordination, attention, and emotional regulation. In this way, dance classes make a valuable



contribution to the holistic development of children and young people.

Dance classes are therefore not only an artistic activity, but an important component of Delta Cultura's educational work, bringing together expression, community, and personal development. ■

STORIES WORTH TELLING



EVERYONE IS ON THEIR PHONE

(told by Kutxinha – educator and football coach)

In the homework room, Katilany and Emily (both 11 years old) were discussing work and homework. Katilany believed homework was hard work, while Emily disagreed.

After the discussion faded, Katilany continued thinking. After a while, she said: “Do you know what most people in the world are doing right now? They’re looking at their phones. I’m sure of it.”

A CONTENTIOUS FRIENDSHIP

(told by Samir – educator)

Every morning, Taissa, Neimara, Nimara, and Gissara (all 9 years old) come to the Education Center together. They are best friends and spend all their time at the center together.

Taissa is the smallest and most affectionate; she loves hugs and always looks after the others.

Neimara is the most outspoken, full of energy and always ready for adventure.

Nimara is very possessive and needs everything to go her way, especially during play.

Gissara is the gentlest and wins everyone over with her loving and cheerful nature.

Throughout the day, small arguments arise – little disputes, sometimes tears. Yet when the



center closes, they hug each other and walk home arm in arm, with no sign of conflict. The next day, it all starts again.



GISELE, LUANA, AND THEIR MOTHERS

(told by Jassica – kindergarten educator)

Gisele and Luana were sitting next to each other in kindergarten, talking while they were drawing. Both had lost their mothers.

Gisele explained to Luana:

“I have three mothers. One of them is already in heaven.”

Luana thought for a moment and replied: “My mother is also in heaven. But at night I always see her. She is the brightest star in the sky.”



SLACKLINE TRAINING

Slackline training is a permanent part of the Education Center's programme and takes place twice a week. It is led by Denis and is particularly popular among children.

The idea for this activity is based on scientific findings from learning and movement research. Studies show that the neurobiological processes and neurotransmitters ac-

tivated when the body loses balance and has to restore it also play a central role in learning. From a pedagogical perspective, it therefore makes sense to deliberately combine balance exercises with learning processes or even place them before learning activities.

In everyday practice, a differentiated picture emerges: while the more demanding exercises on highlines are used only by a few, mostly older children and adolescents, the low slackline is very popular and regularly used by many children. It offers a low-threshold entry, enables quick experiences of success, and strengthens concentration, body awareness, and self-confidence.

In order to anchor slackline training safely and sustainably at the center, Delta Cultura has installed concrete pillars to which the slacklines can be securely and permanently attached. This makes it possible to flexibly integrate the training into the daily routine of the Education Center.

Slackline training combines movement, play, and learning in a very direct way and complements the pedagogical work of the Education Center, particularly in the areas of concentration, self-regulation, and motor development.



HOLIDAY PROGRAMME

HOLIDAY PROGRAMME

School holidays represent special phases throughout the year for the Education Center. During all holiday periods – including the Christmas, semester, Easter, and summer holidays – Delta Cultura offers a holiday programme. A key advantage of these times is that homework support and tutoring are suspended, allowing the focus to be placed entirely on learning games, free play, and shared activities. This creates space for other forms of learning, which are embraced by the children with great enthusiasm.

The holiday programme is very popular with the children. At the same time, Delta Cultura reaches children during these periods who do not attend the center regularly during the school year – for example because they are otherwise not allowed to participate or due to family obligations. For many working parents, the holiday programme is also an important form of support, as their children are well cared for during school-free periods.

Delta Cultura deliberately refrains from offering a fixed holiday schedule with a strict timetable. Instead, the educators prepare open activities in various areas. The art and computer rooms are continuously available to children, while in the sports area, Football 3 tournaments and other sporting competitions are organised. This open structure allows children to decide for themselves what they wish to take part in and promotes initiative, creativity, and social interaction.

The absolute highlight of the holiday programme is the holiday camp, during which the children stay overnight at



the Education Center. For many children, this camp is one of the most important experiences of all – they love it and often talk about it throughout the year. The holiday camp takes place regularly in July as well as during the Christmas and semester holidays, and each time marks a special conclusion to the shared time at the center.

In August, the Education Center remains closed. This period coincides with the rainy season, during which many children are involved in family responsibilities and help with agricultural work. At the same time, this is deliberately the period in which all staff members of the Education Center take their annual leave, allowing them to rest and recharge for the coming school year.

The holiday programme illustrates Delta Cultura's extended educational approach particularly clearly: learning does not take place only in formal school contexts, but also through play, free exploration, social interaction, and shared experiences. ■



EVENTS



EVENTS

Delta Cultura regularly organises sports, educational, and cultural events. This categorisation serves as an overview, even though the individual areas cannot always be clearly separated in terms of content. Education does not take place only in workshops, but also through sport, cultural activities, and shared experiences. The categories therefore represent different approaches rather than distinct fields of impact.

The sports events mainly include football matches, tournaments, and championships. They are particularly popular among children and young people and form a central component of Delta Cultura's work. In addition to physical activity, these events promote social skills, teamwork, reliability, and fairness.

The educational events take place primarily at the Education Center and consist of thematic workshops. External specialists are specifically invited to address topics that are especially relevant to the everyday lives of children and young people. These include, among others, issues such as gender equality, menstruation, health, drug prevention, and social challenges. The aim is to convey



knowledge, create spaces for reflection, and support the personal development of the participants.

In the cultural field, the annual Batuco Festival stands out in particular. In addition, Delta Cultura contributes cultural elements to various public events, such as celebrations on Children's Day.

Overall, the events demonstrate how closely sports, cultural, and educational approaches are interconnected at Delta Cultura and how they jointly contribute to the holistic development of children and young people. ■

TRADITION



BATUCO

Batuco is a traditional form of music, song, and dance from the island of Santiago and is practiced exclusively by women. The powerful rhythms, call-and-response singing, and expressive movements are deeply rooted in the history and identity of Cape Verdean culture and have been passed down orally across generations.

At Delta Cultura, Batuco has been an integral part of the organisation's work since its very beginning. Marisa, founder of Delta Cultura, has built and accompanied the Batuco group from the start. Today, the group is well known far beyond Tarrafal and already performed in Austria in 2008. Since then, it has had regular performances – often several times a week – particularly for tourists in local restaurants, as well as at private events such as weddings and birthday celebrations and at public festivities.

The lyrics of the Batuco songs, written by Marisa, deliberately address social issues such as early pregnancies, the social challenges faced by women, and family respon-

TRADITION



sibilities, while at the same time emphasising the cultural significance and identity of Batuco as a living tradition.

Although the Batuco group does not rehearse at the Education Center, Batuco is inseparably linked to Delta Cultura. The group forms an important part of the organisation's cultural identity and makes a significant contribution to the visibility and public recognition of Delta Cultura – both locally and internationally.

At the same time, Batuco plays an important role in the preservation of cultural traditions. Through regular performances and the transmission of songs, rhythms, and movements, Batuco remains alive and accessible to younger generations. In this way, Delta Cultura connects cultural heritage with contemporary realities and creates space for female expression, community, and self-confidence. ■



TREE NURSERY

Delta Cultura's tree nursery is funded by the Daniel Schlegel Environmental Foundation and is an independent project. Two permanently employed staff members grow around 1,000 fruit trees per year, which are distributed free of charge to families in the region. These include, among others, mango, cashew, tamarind, and pinon trees.

On the grounds of the Education Center itself, numerous fruit trees have also been planted over recent years. The aim is to gradually develop a forest garden that provides shade, improves the microclimate, and offers children and young people direct access to nature and plants. The trees have been growing well for several years and are increasingly shaping the appearance of the center's grounds.

It has meanwhile become widely known in the community that Delta Cultura distributes fruit trees. People regularly come to the Education Center to collect saplings and plant them in their gardens or on their land. The nursery has thus become an important point of contact for the local population.

The tree nursery is overseen by Pilika, Delta Cultura's head gardener. He has extensive expertise in plant care and is responsible not only for the nursery but also for the maintenance of all other plants and green areas at the Education Center.



For the coming year, it is planned to renovate the tree nursery, as the wind protection and shade structure have become worn over time. In addition, the green fence surrounding the Education Center is to be reinforced in order to prevent goats, sheep, chickens, and other animals from entering the grounds. This is an important prerequisite for better protecting the existing planting areas and for enabling the cultivation of more vegetables in the future.

The tree nursery combines ecological responsibility with practical support for the local population and is a core element of Delta Cultura's sustainable work. ■



STORIES WORTH TELLING

RUAN AND HIS LOVE FOR PLANTS

(told by Jassica – kindergarten educator)

A tree had grown in front of my house. My aunt did not want it there and intended to pull it out. Ruan (6 years old), who attends our kindergarten, happened to be visiting at the time.

When my aunt expressed her anger about the tree, Ruan explained to her with great conviction:

“If you pull out the tree, God will not be happy at all. Pilika (the gardener at the Education Center) explained to us how important plants are, and we water the trees at the center every day.”



PICAPAU, HOMEWORK, AND HIS PASSPORT

(told by Kutxinha – educator and football coach)

Picapau, 7 years old, came into the classroom as he does every day and started doing his homework. After a short while, he stopped and explained to me:

“From now on, I’ll only do my homework when I feel like it. Because now I have a passport and I will soon go to Portugal. Nobody can bother me anymore.”

GISELE AND THE BIG BAD WOLF

(told by Margarida – kindergarten coordinator)

I was in the art room when Gisele (5 years old) came and sat next to me.

“Are you afraid of the wolf?” she asked me.

“Sometimes. And you?”

“I’m not,” Gisele replied confidently. “If I see one, I’ll catch it and build a wall in its stomach.”

“Oh Gisele, if that’s the case, then I’m not afraid of the wolf anymore either.”

Gisele continued to encourage me:

“You have to forget the fear, then you’re stronger and the wolf won’t catch you.”



MONITORING AND EVALUATION

PARTICIPANT REGISTRATION AND SUPPORT

All children and young people attending the Education Center are registered in the Delta Cultura database, which includes basic personal information as well as details about their social background.

Each participant is assigned a dedicated staff member who serves as their primary contact person. This person is responsible for:

- monitoring attendance,
- observing academic development,
- building a stable and trusting relationship.

When necessary, the staff member visits families to discuss concerns – such as irregular attendance – and to better understand the child's home environment.

INTERNAL MONITORING AND EVALUATION

The individual situations of participants are discussed weekly within the team (42 such meetings were held in 2025).

Commonly addressed challenges included:

- irregular participation,
- minor theft,
- conflict behaviour and the use of violence as a coping mechanism,
- school dropout,
- indications of difficult family circumstances.

Many of these issues in 2025 were linked to the emigration of parents or close relatives, which placed emotional strain on many children. In such cases, the team provides additional attention and support. Concerning behaviour is discussed together with the center's psychologist (employed since 2025).

EVALUATION OF PROGRAMMES

A recurring topic in team meetings is how children and young people perceive the center's activities:

- Are the programmes being well received?
- What improvements do participants wish for?
- What needs become visible in daily interactions?

These reflections intensify before and after the summer break, allowing the team to refine existing programmes and develop new approaches.

KEY DEVELOPMENTS IN 2025

1. Introduction of Psychological Support

In October 2025, a psychologist joined the Education

Center team. She supports children and adolescents facing emotional challenges, strengthens their resilience, and complements the existing social support structures. A dedicated chapter in this report provides a detailed description of this new service.

2. Ongoing Support for Adolescents Aged 15 and Above

The continuous support for adolescents aged 15 and older, first introduced in 2024, was further strengthened in 2025. Under the guidance of long-standing staff member Cutchinha, this age group meets regularly for discussion sessions and joint activities – often on weekends.

The psychological support service is closely integrated into this work. The psychologist frequently participates in the meetings, provides guidance on personal challenges, and helps the group navigate the developmental tasks of adolescence.

3. Additional Weekly Meeting for Innovation

Alongside the regular monitoring meetings, an additional weekly session was introduced to focus exclusively on innovative ideas for improving and expanding the center's programmes. The aim is to break routine patterns and present children and young people with new challenges.

The ideas developed in these sessions are gradually incorporated into daily practice.

INDICATORS OF PROGRESS

Our fundamental approach remains unchanged: instead of tests and grades, we prioritise personal attention, strong relationships, and alternative forms of evaluation.

Indicators presented in this report include:

- the number of educational activities conducted in 2025,
- the number of sports, cultural, and educational events organised,
- everyday observations and accounts from staff members,
- voices and feedback from children and young people,
- reflections and statements from team members,
- stories from the Education Center that are worth telling,
- contributions from partners and stakeholders.

Despite all quantitative and qualitative data, the most important outcome remains that every child is happy, can develop freely, and is accepted as they are. These essential aspects are difficult to measure – but they form the heart of the Education Center's work. ■

MY IMPRESSIONS OF THE NGO DELTA CULTURA

By Aleida Furtado,
President of the Faculty of Education and Sport at the University of Cape Verde (UNI-CV)

The Delta Cultura Association has increasingly established itself as a reference point in the development of educational, cultural, and social initiatives aimed at children and young people in the municipality of Tarrafal, with particular attention to contexts of greater social vulnerability. Its consistent and committed work demonstrates a clear concern for promoting inclusion, equity, and the holistic development of children and young people, thus making a significant contribution to the construction of fairer and more promising educational pathways.

The educational support provided by the Delta Cultura Association, which we have observed during visits to the organisation's facilities, reflects an ongoing concern for the well-being, motivation, and socio-emotional development of children and young people, integrating educational, cultural, and social dimensions. This integrated vision of education represents an important contribution to preventing school failure, strengthening self-esteem,

and creating more inclusive future opportunities. Another concrete example of this approach is the organisation of the Education Forum in April of the current year, promoted by the association, which brought together national and international experts to critically and substantively discuss contemporary challenges in education, fostering dialogue between science, pedagogical practice, and community-based intervention. The Education Forum sought to understand current challenges and propose solutions through innovative pedagogical practices grounded in research in the fields of pedagogy and neuroscience.

In this context, the Faculty of Education and Sport (FaED) of the University of Cape Verde (UNI-CV) recognises and commends the valuable work carried out by the Delta Cultura Association, considering it an innovative, inspiring initiative with high social impact. The Executive Committee of FaED therefore expresses its strong interest in continuing and strengthening collaboration and partnership with the Delta Cultura Association, based on



ALEIDA FURTADO

President of the Faculty of Education and Sport
at the University of Cape Verde (UNI-CV)

Aleida Furtado actively contributed to the organisation of the Education Forum, participated in all three days of the event, facilitated a table during the World Café, and delivered a speech at the closing ceremony.

Following the Education Forum, she visited the Delta Cultura Education Centre together with other representatives of the Faculty of Education, where possible forms of further collaboration were discussed. This exchange led to the training programme for the educators of the Education Centre described in this report.

SCIENTIFIC PERSPECTIVES

knowledge sharing, technical and scientific cooperation, and the joint development of projects in the areas of education, training, research, and community intervention.

This perspective is supported by the principles set out in the UNESCO Report (2021): *Reimagining Our Futures Together: A New Social Contract for Education*, which emphasises the need to build education grounded in co-operation, solidarity, inclusion, and social justice, valuing the role of communities, higher education institutions, and local initiatives in transforming education systems. By promoting innovative, inclusive, and socially committed pedagogical practices, the Delta Cultura Association

contributes concretely to the realisation of this new social contract for education.

FaED believes that the articulation between academia and community-based initiatives represents a privileged pathway for enhancing contextualised, scientifically grounded, and common-good-oriented educational practices, with direct benefits for children, young people, and the wider community, thereby contributing to the realisation of the right to quality education for all children, particularly those in situations of greater social vulnerability. ■



DATA AND FIGURES ON PROGRAMMES AND EVENTS

In 2025, a total of **2,714 educational activities** were carried out at the Education Center. This figure illustrates the scope of continuous educational work and is based on 42 active weeks per year (210 operating days), excluding weekends, the event month of July, and the holiday month of August.

Regular Core Programmes

These programmes form the backbone of daily educational activities and take place continuously throughout the year:

- Football training (10 age groups): 840
- Computer science classes (6 age groups): 504
- School support (homework help / tutoring): 210
- Educational games: 210
- Kindergarten: 210
- Art classes: 210

Courses and Accompanying Activities

In addition to the core programmes, regular courses and specialised accompanying activities were offered:

- English classes: 84
- French classes: 84
- Sewing course: 84
- Drumming classes: 84
- Dance classes: 84
- Slackline training: 84
- Psychological support: 26 (since October 2025)

Total number of educational activities carried out: 2,714

In addition to the regular programmes, daily holiday camps were organised during all school holidays. Furthermore, residential holiday camps with overnight stays at the Education Center took place three times per year. These formats are **not included** in the total number stated above.

Through this broad and continuous range of activities, the Education Center makes a sustainable contribution to education, creativity, and social development within the community.

Activities per Child – Illustrative Annual Overview

To illustrate the scope of the programmes at an individual level, the following example calculation shows the possible participation of one child over the course of a year. It is based on regular participation in several programmes offered by the Education Center.

A child who participates continuously in the programmes may attend, over the course of a year, among others:

- Homework help / tutoring (daily): 210
- Educational games (three times per week): 126
- Artistic activities (twice per week): 84
- Football training (twice per week): 84
- Computer science classes (twice per week): 84
- Language classes (twice per week): 84
- Music classes (twice per week): 84
- Events (estimated): 20
- Football matches: 15

In total, a child therefore participates in **791 educational activities per year**.

This figure illustrates the high intensity and diversity of the support provided by the Education Center. Through the combination of education, creativity, sport, and social learning, the individual development of children is supported in a holistic and long-term manner.

Number of Events Organised in 2025

In 2025, Delta Cultura organised a total of **106 events**. These can be assigned to the areas of sport, education, and culture. It should be noted that the individual categories often overlap in terms of content.

- Sports events: 78
- Educational events: 24
- Cultural events: 3
- Education Forum: 1

CONCLUSION

With a high number of educational activities and events in the areas of sport, culture, and education, Delta Cultura made a significant contribution to community life in 2025. At the same time, the organisation strengthened social skills, cultural exchange, and sustainable educational processes for children and young people.

DATA AND FIGURES

PARTICIPANTS OF THE EDUCATION CENTER

PARTICIPANT NUMBERS IN THE DAILY PROGRAMMES

Children and young people attend the Education Center from Monday to Friday either in the morning (08:00–11:00) or in the afternoon (14:00–17:00), depending on whether they attend public school in the morning or in the afternoon.

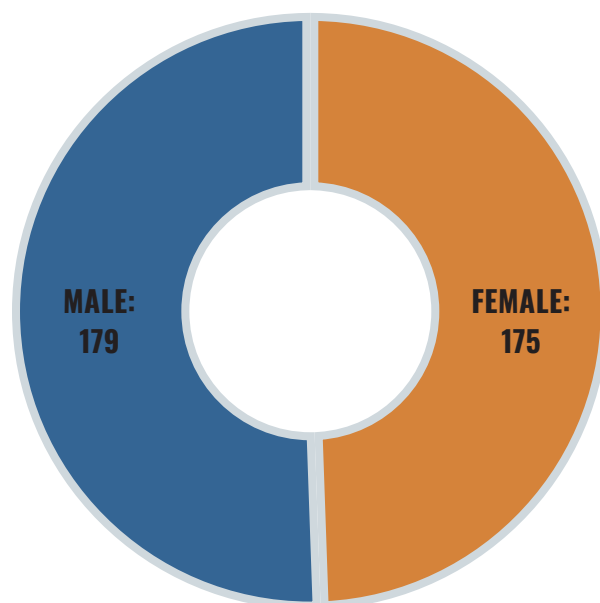
Kindergarten children also attend the Center from Monday to Friday and are cared for full-time from 08:00 to 16:00. They receive a fruit snack as well as a warm lunch.

All participants in the various programmes of the Education Center are registered in the Delta Cultura database, which is provided by the Austrian company Marmara, a long-standing sponsor of Delta Cultura.

This ensures reliable and continuous documentation of regular participants.

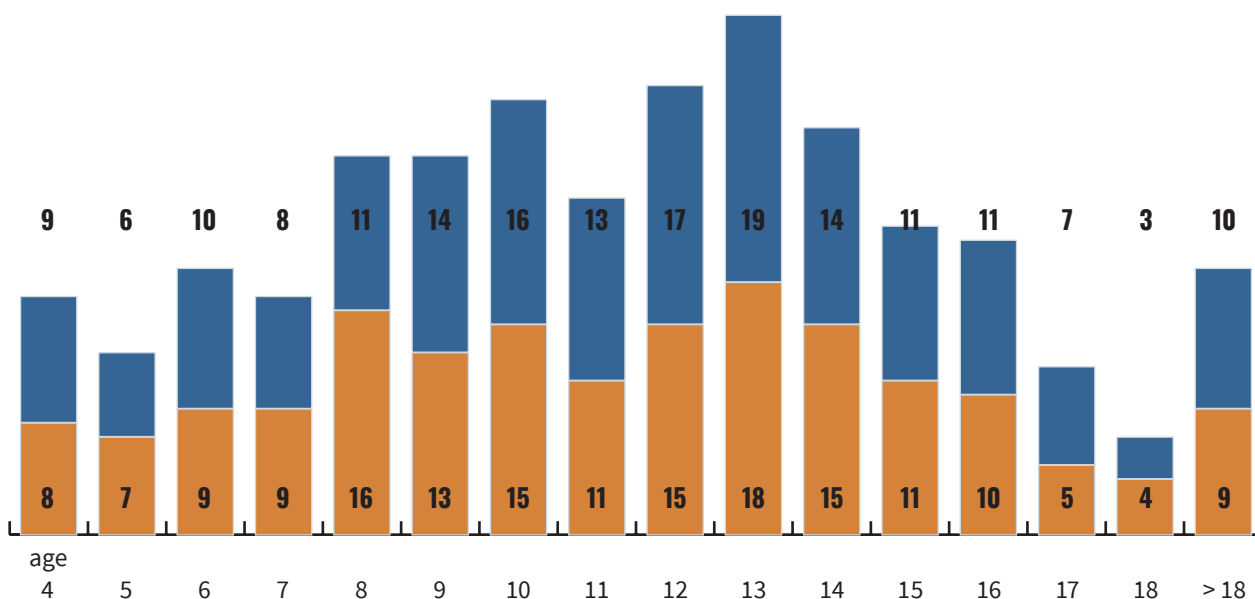
The total number of registered participants changes only slightly from year to year. All children and young people who take part in one or more activities of the Education Center are recorded.

At the end of 2025, **354 children and young people** were registered (**51% male / 49% female**).



PARTICIPANTS BY AGE GROUP

This stable number of participants highlights the continuous demand for the programmes and the strong integration of the Education Center within the community.



DATA AND FIGURES

PARTICIPANTS IN EDUCATIONAL, SPORTS, AND CULTURAL EVENTS

The number of participants in educational events is estimated, as these are often attended by children, young people, and adults from other municipalities as well.

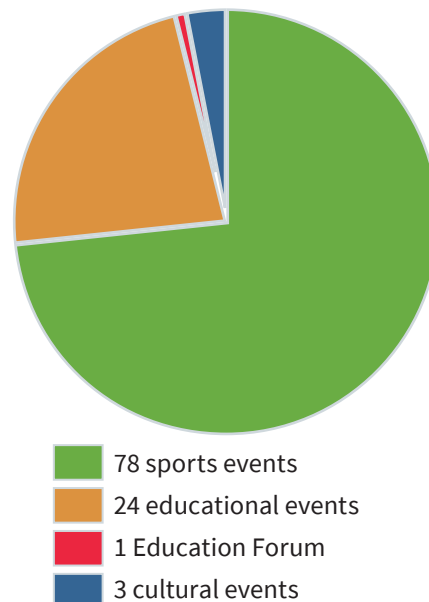
For sports and cultural events held outside the center, the number of participants can only be estimated due to the open nature and high visitor turnout.

The **estimated total number of participants in 2025 is 5,470 people.**

This figure is composed as follows:

- 78 sports events with approx. 40 participants each: 3,120
- 24 educational events with approx. 50 participants each: 1,200
- 1 Education Forum: 250
- 3 cultural events with approx. 300 participants each: 900

These figures illustrate the wide reach of the events beyond the Education Center itself.



INDIRECT BENEFICIARIES

In addition to the direct participants, numerous other groups benefit indirectly from the activities of Delta Cultura.

The educational programmes improve the academic performance of children and young people and thus contribute positively to the overall educational level of public schools in Tarrafal (approximately 4,200 students).

At the same time, the programmes relieve parents and guardians, as they know their children are well cared for, allowing them to focus more on work or seeking employment.

Furthermore, Delta Cultura regularly organises cleaning and beautification activities throughout the municipality, benefiting the entire population of Tarrafal (approx. 9,000 inhabitants).

In 2025, approximately **EUR 150,000** from international donors also flowed into Tarrafal, directly benefiting the local economy.

As a result, the work of Delta Cultura has an impact that extends far beyond the direct participants.

CONCLUSION

In 2025, Delta Cultura reached a large and diverse target group through both daily educational programmes and numerous events. The combination of stable core programmes, open event formats, and strong indirect effects clearly shows that the Education Center is not only a place of learning, but also a central social and cultural actor in Tarrafal. ■

STORIES WORTH TELLING

MATEUS AND THE WORMS

(told by Kutxinha – educator and football coach)

In one of the rooms at the Education Center, a human skeleton is painted on the wall—not to frighten the children, but to help them learn the names and locations of the bones.

Mateus (8 years old) studied the skeleton carefully and then explained to me:

“One day, we’ll all be like this.”

“Why do you think so?”

“Well, we all have to survive. And the worms need something to eat.”



RUAN AND THE WORDS OF ENCOURAGEMENT

(told by Kutxinha – educator and football coach)

Ruan (8 years old) comes from the neighbouring village of Chão Bom. Before joining the Education Center, he lived in Assomada and played football for a local club.

When he registered at the center, he had to choose which educator would be responsible for him. He chose me, even though he didn’t know me. When I asked why, he replied:

“I saw you at a match as a coach. You always encouraged your players and praised them. I want you to encourage me like that too.”

ARGUING CHANGES NOTHING

(told by Carina – educator and football coach)

I was on the football field when Patrick and his cousin Marcelo (both 10 years old) started arguing. Patrick ran away, Marcelo chased him. In front of the kindergarten, they began hitting each other. Before I could intervene, they stopped and returned to the football field.

I called them over and told them to apologise to each other. Marcelo did so immediately, while Patrick was clearly unsure.

“I argue with Marcelo every day. But it never changes anything.”

After a short moment of reflection, Patrick apologised as well.



PEOPLE FROM DELTA CULTURA



EDLENE – A NATURAL TALENT FOR MOVEMENT

Edlene Milene Vaz Pereira, known to everyone as Edlene, was born in 2005 in Tarrafal – in the same year the Education Center opened its doors. She has an older sister, Marcilia, who is two years older, and a much younger brother who was born just one year ago.

Edlene spent her early years living with her mother, father, and sister. When she was three, her parents separated. She then grew up with her mother and her sister Marcilia.

“My mother is the best mother there is. She always supports me in everything I do. Just like my sister Marcilia.”

At the age of six, when she started primary school, Edlene came to the Education Center for the first time. Her sister Marcilia was already a participant.

“My first memories of the Education Center are all good,” Edlene recalls. “I remember doing homework with Kutxinha, who taught me how to write, the many friends I had there, and of course the football training and the

football matches with Nene, my coach. From the very first day, football was my passion. I can’t even say exactly why.”

Football training at the Education Center has always been organized in a mixed format, with boys and girls training together from U7 to U13. When Edlene started, this “mixing” was still unusual, and many boys were not very happy about it.

Her coach Nene remembers: “Edlene’s outstanding talent contributed a lot to the girls becoming fully integrated and accepted very quickly. Today it is normal for boys and girls to play together in the early age categories.”

Edlene never had major difficulties at school. Until she finished, she never had to repeat a grade or worry about passing to the next level.

“I always studied only at the Education Center. Never at home. First always with Kutxinha, later with Zito and Samir.”

But when you ask Edlene about her childhood and youth, she prefers to talk about football. “Other sports

PEOPLE FROM DELTA CULTURA

never really interested me, even if I played them at school or elsewhere. Not even futsal interests me.”

Despite her exclusive passion for football, it was always clear that Edlene had exceptional physical talent. A volunteer from Germany, Julia, who spent some time at Delta Cultura and was an acrobatic gymnast, practiced different exercises with the children on the beach. She was deeply impressed with Edlene’s abilities: “I’ve never seen a girl who learns even complicated exercises with coordination challenges as quickly as Edlene.”

A highlight for Edlene were always the football matches on the weekends and later the championship games. “Impossible to sleep the night before those games,” she recalls.

Her coach Nene also tells a characteristic story about 13-year-old Edlene: “We took part in a big tournament. Edlene was the only girl playing with the U13. In one of the first games she couldn’t participate – I don’t remember why. We lost that game. When I asked the players afterwards why they thought we had lost, they all agreed: ‘because Edlene wasn’t there’. After that she didn’t miss a single game – and we won the tournament.”

A major change occurred when Edlene moved to secondary school at the age of twelve. Even before that she spent a lot of time with her aunt and helped in the household. With the school change she moved permanently to her aunt – a sister of her mother.

Such moves involving minors are not unusual in Cape Verde, often due to financial reasons. If there is an aunt or uncle living alone, it can relieve both families.

Edlene confirms that the good relationship with her mother and sister remained unchanged.

At 18, she completed school successfully. Her sister Marcilia, also a very good football player, was already in the military at that time, because it is a requirement for becoming a police officer. “My sister always told me that I wouldn’t last two days in the military. I’m too rebellious and I always say what I think.”

In the first year after finishing school, Edlene followed the call of a football club in Praia. They promised her that if she played for their team, she would be able to go to the USA within a year and have her studies financed there.



PEOPLE FROM DELTA CULTURA



“I remember Florian warning me at the time, saying that unfortunately many clubs promise the sky just to get good female players. And that’s exactly what happened. After one year I came back to Tarrafal. Of course I was disappointed, but not too much. I always believe that I will find my path. The important thing is to stay alive and healthy.”

After that year, Edlene began studying Business Administration online. “It’s not my greatest interest, but everything is better than doing nothing at all, and I received a scholarship for this program. Delta Cultura helped me get it.”

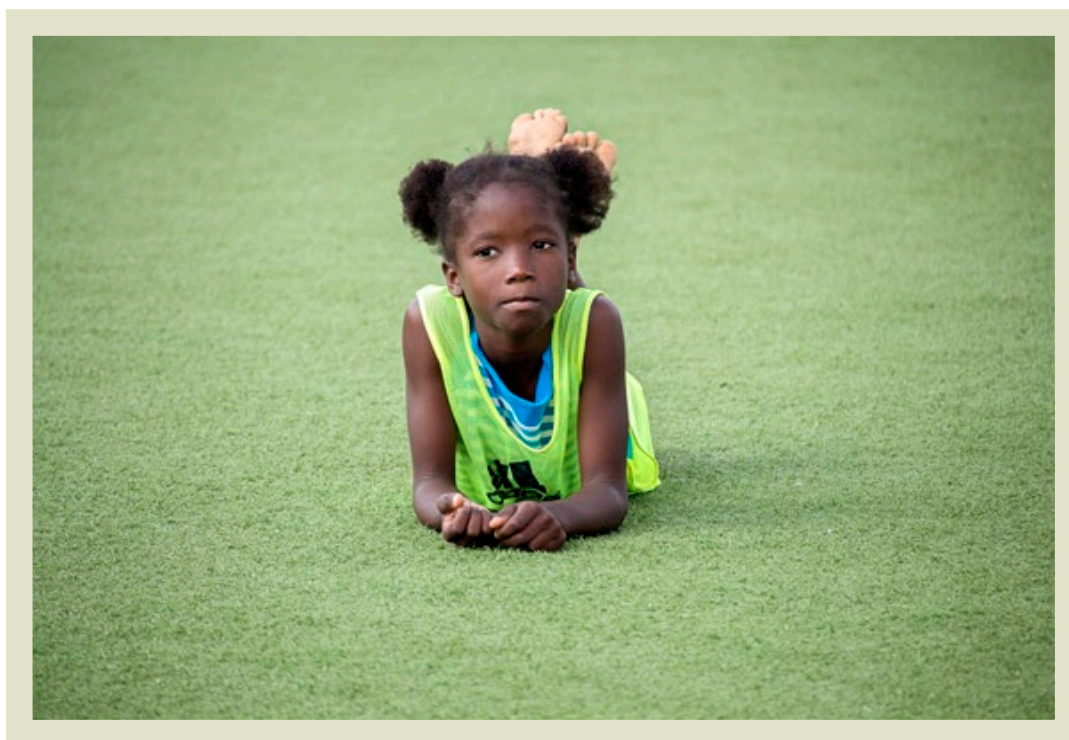
The year before, Edlene had taken part in the regional championship with Delta Cultura for the first time – and won it with her team. This victory qualified them for the

national championship, in which they took part the same year. In the following year, Edlene and her team again won the regional championship, and once more advanced to the national level.

“We never won at the national championships because we always played with a very young team. But I learned a lot in these tournaments – not only about football but also about life.”

Since Edlene studies online and Delta Cultura now has good contacts with football clubs in Austria and Portugal, the idea arose to travel to Europe with her and arrange trial trainings.

In April 2026, this new adventure will begin for Edlene ...



EDUCATION FORUM



TARRAFAL EDUCATION FORUM – BRIDGE BETWEEN SCIENCE AND PRACTICE

9–11 APRIL 2025, TARRAFAL

In April 2025, the Tarrafal Education Forum – Bridge Between Science and Practice took place, organised by Delta Cultura in collaboration with the Municipality of Tarrafal, the University of Cape Verde (Uni-CV), and the University of Santiago. Over three days, researchers, educators, policymakers, and students discussed key challenges and future directions for education in Cape Verde.

The forum was opened by **President José Maria Neves**, who emphasised that the country's education system requires deep – and in parts radical – reform. He called for an educational approach that strengthens creativity, critical thinking, problem solving, autonomy, and emotional intelligence. Opening remarks were also given by Mayor **José dos Reis Lopes Varela** and **Florian Wegenstein**, co-founder of Delta Cultura.



EDUCATION FORUM



The speakers included **Dr. Wolfgang Knecht** (University of Zurich / ETH Zurich), Jeannette Moreira (Uni-CV), Dr. Mary Helen Immordino-Yang (University of Southern California), Dr. Luís Rodrigues (University of Santiago), Dr. Cláudia Gonçalves (University of Mindelo) and Dr. Arlindo Mendes Vieira (Uni-CV). Their contributions brought together perspectives from neuroscience, psychology, learning science, didactics, digital literacy, and assessment research. Across the sessions, a clear picture emerged: learning is deeply connected to emotions, relationships, safe environments, and well-designed learning spaces, and it requires a modern, research-based pedagogical approach. At the same time, it became evident that curricula, examination structures, and teacher training in Cape Verde require significant further development.

The third day was dedicated to a large World Café with ten thematic tables. More than 150 participants discussed topics such as early childhood development, teacher-student relationships, digital dependency, learning psycholo-

gy, assessment, child-centred learning environments, and the promotion of creativity and well-being. The results showed a strong willingness to explore new educational approaches and to align education more closely with the lived realities of children and young people.

Delta Cultura initiated the forum, coordinated the entire programme, and contributed its experience from more than 20 years of educational work. The organisation created a space where science and practice could genuinely meet – something that had previously been missing in Cape Verde. Feedback from participants confirmed that the forum filled an important gap and set a new standard within the national educational discourse.

For Delta Cultura, the forum represents an essential building block in further developing the Bildung 27 project, which aims to anchor new, scientifically grounded educational approaches in Cape Verde over the long term. ■



SUYLA

Suyla is a psychology student and took part in all three days of the Education Forum. In a statement during the closing event of the forum, she said:

“I had no hope. I hope people understand what it means to live as a young woman without hope, even though one longs for change. Today, after the Education Forum, I feel strengthened, undeniably enriched – and ready to work for change.”

ABOUT THE NGO DELTA CULTURA

By Jeannette Moreira, Professor of Neuropsychology at the University of Cape Verde (UNI-CV)

The first thought that comes to mind is that I got to know Delta very late. This means that I have liked the NGO very much ever since I got to know it. I would have very much liked to have known it earlier, as I greatly admire the work history carried out by Delta in the Tarrafal region and immediately felt the desire to collaborate in some way.

NGOs are partners of the State in the development of populations; they are the arm that reaches out to more remote areas and specific population groups. Delta has been fulfilling this mission with great dignity for many years and has already reached and benefited different population groups. Delta's work in this region is unique, as the extreme north of the island is in great need of this type of initiative. Delta's areas of activity have also been adjusted over time to the needs of its target audience. Delta has a mature and long-standing staff, but also young people, all with a dynamic spirit and confidence in the educational perspective they defend. An internal ecosystem has been created that works well, and children and adolescents very much enjoy attending the Centre.

Over the years, needs remain and challenges increase, but Delta has continued to exist, unlike other initiatives

that gradually lose strength on the ground. Some issues seem to persist and require more constant adjustments or even a new perspective on fundamental aspects. In this context, I refer to the relationship with parents who, due to cultural and educational issues, do not always easily align with Delta's educational approach; I also refer to some differences identified in the relationship with schools and with some local education professionals, who do not clearly perceive what Delta aims for, such as a more holistic education that better respects the individuality of children and their idiosyncrasies.

These challenges, which are inherent to this type of work and shared with other NGOs that work with people/families/groups, can be overcome through persistence in community education, strengthening a closer relationship with families, continuous involvement of Delta with the traditional education system and other institutions, and ongoing flexibility or adaptation to more resistant demands. Continuing to reflect on successes and challenges, remaining open to new ideas, and following social, local, and national dynamics also strengthen Delta's work and the achievement of future objectives. Keep up the good work!



JEANNETTE MOREIRA

Psychology, Neuroscience and Neuropsychology

Graduate Assistant Professor at the University of Cape Verde (UNI-CV), speaker at the Fórum de Educação Tarrafal – Ponte entre Ciência e Prática organised by Delta Cultura, and actively involved in the preparation of the Forum.

Together with the other psychologists from her Psychology disciplinary group at UNI-CV, she carried out a visit to the Delta Cultura Education Centre, contributing to the analysis of the psychosocial needs of children and adolescents. She organised the psychology training at the Centre described in this report and supported Delta Cultura in the selection of the psychologist who is now part of the Education Centre's team.

QUALITY ASSURANCE



FURTHER TRAINING OF EDUCATION CENTER STAFF

The most important staff training activities in 2025 were directly linked to the Education Forum, organised by Delta Cultura in April, and to the resulting cooperation with the University of Cabo Verde (UNI-CV). In particular, the collaboration with the Faculty of Psychology and

the Faculty of Education made it possible to offer targeted and practice-oriented training programmes for the staff of the Education Center.

PSYCHOLOGICAL TRAINING FOR STAFF

Within the framework of this cooperation with the Faculty of Psychology, a comprehensive psychological training programme was implemented for the first time in 2025. Together with the educators of the Education Center, the following thematic areas were defined:

Module 1 – Developmental Stages

- Child development
- Adolescent development

Module 2 – Intervention Strategies with Children and Adolescents

- Conflict management and dealing with challenging behaviour
- Communication and interpersonal relationships



QUALITY ASSURANCE

Module 3 – Subjective Well-being of Staff Members

- Emotional self-regulation and self-care
- Stress and time management

The training programme spans six weekends (four in November/December 2025 and two in January 2026) and is conducted by psychologists from UNI-CV directly at the Education Center. Participants include staff members of the Education Center as well as teachers from public schools in Tarrafal.

PEDAGOGICAL TRAINING

In addition, a two-day pedagogical training programme was held in 2025 in cooperation with the Faculty of Education of UNI-CV. Samir and Kutxinha took part in this training and subsequently passed on the content to the other educators of the Education Center as part of an internal knowledge-transfer process.

The training covered the following key areas:

- Learning difficulties and pedagogical support
Identifying signs of learning difficulties and applying simple and effective support approaches in everyday pedagogical practice.
- Foundations of pedagogical work
Introduction to child-centred pedagogical principles, with a focus on individual support and the promotion of autonomy and creativity.
- Didactic methods
Practical approaches such as project-based learning, cooperative games, and the use of the natural environment as a learning space.
- Communication and pedagogical relationships
Strengthening communication skills to build positive relationships, manage groups clearly, and interact with children in an empathetic and respectful manner.

This training made a significant contribution to quality assurance and the further development of pedagogical work at the Education Center, while also strengthening the professional competence and sense of responsibility within the team.

Targeted staff training is a central quality factor for Delta Cultura and a key prerequisite for sustainable and effective educational work. ■



FUND RAISING



ART FOR EDUCATION – CHARITY AUCTION 2025

The art auction represents a central pillar of our activities in Austria and makes an important contribution to financing the activities of Delta Cultura Cabo Verde.

At our 13th charity auction in support of Delta Cultura's educational project, 100 high-quality works by contemporary artists were offered for auction. As in previous years, the auction was conducted online via the Dorotheum auction platform.

Following approximately ten months of collection, curation, and preparation of all artworks, including the production of a printed catalogue, all pieces were framed and exhibited on June 16 and 17, 2025, at Atelier Paul Landerl. Numerous visitors attended the viewing. The final hours of the auction were traditionally spent together at the atelier, where we celebrated the excellent result achieved.

Since 2019, the art auction has been coordinated by Kasia Karlik. Thomas Redl, who initiated the auction in 2014, and Aleksandra Zeddies once again made a significant contribution. We would also like to express our sincere thanks to Sebastian C. Schmidt of Dorotheum for his continued and valuable support.

Our special thanks go to all artists who so generously express their solidarity and connection with people they do not personally know. Over the years, they have made more than 1,500 artworks available to us.

Preparations for the 2026 art auction are already well underway. The auction will take place online on the Dorotheum website from June 1 to June 12, 2026. ■

www.dorotheum.com/deltacultura

IMPRESSIONS



IMPRESSIONS



IMPRESSIONS



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IMPRESSIONS



COOPERATION



OUR PARTNERS 2025

Our sincere thanks go to all partners of the Education Center (listed in alphabetical order), without whose support the activities described here would not have been possible.





IMPRINT

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