

NIGERIA: Creative Awarded Northern Education Initiative Contract for Bauchi & Sokoto in Nigeria



WASHINGTON, D.C. – November 25, 2009 -- Creative Associates International, Inc. is pleased to announce that the U.S. Agency for International Development has awarded Creative the Northern Education Initiative contract under a competitive procurement.

The Initiative will strengthen state and local government capacity to deliver basic education services by addressing key issues in the management, sustainability and oversight of basic education. By so doing, the Initiative will also increase the access of orphans and vulnerable children to basic education and services such as health information and counseling in Nigeria's two northern states of Bauchi and Sokoto. Creative's president, Charito Kruvant, said "Our mission is to support people to realize the positive change they seek. It is a privilege to build on Creative's work in Nigeria to continue to be of service to children."

The choice of Bauchi and Sokoto presents an opportunity to make a difference in partnership with state and local governments and non-governmental agencies. Nigerian authorities recognize the need to address low education, health, gender equity, and economic indicators and drop-out and repetition rates among students that exceed the national average in Bauchi and Sokoto. Teaching conditions are more difficult, with pupil-teacher ratios of 93:1 in Bauchi and 60:1 in Sokoto. The rate is to 42:1 nationally. Similarly, the percentage of National College of Education-qualified teachers in basic education is only 26 percent in Bauchi and 42 percent in Sokoto, compared to 62 percent nationally. The number of orphaned and vulnerable children, including boys leaving home, remains high in the north, and systems for identifying and supporting them are only beginning to develop.

Under USAID's leadership, Creative will partner with Nigerian local and state agencies to reinforce their role in delivering quality basic education services and also helping orphaned and

vulnerable children. In keeping with Creative's community-based approach, the Northern Education Initiative will establish Community Coalitions to support vulnerable children through "compassionate communities" of established networks and institutions, helping them integrate into the mainstream. Support Teams will track the children's progress in school and ensure they have access to all available programs on an ongoing basis to prevent them from "falling through the cracks."

"In Northern Nigeria, children orphaned or made vulnerable for a number of causes, including HIV/AIDS, often have greater difficulties accessing education than children from intact homes," said the Initiative's Project Director Semere Solomon. "This Initiative is aimed at providing opportunities to thousands of deprived children to improve their lives."

The Northern Education Initiative is the fourth task order to be awarded to Creative under USAID's ABE-LINK Indefinite Quantity Contract. Specifically, under ABE/LINK, Creative supports the Agency's goal to link education with health to improve global health, including child, maternal and reproductive health, reduce the incidence of disease, particularly HIV/AIDS, malaria and tuberculosis. In addition to Nigeria, Creative implements ABE/LINK projects in Sudan, Uganda, and, prior to these, Benin.

For more information, please contact Creative Project Director Semere Solomon at SemereS@caii.com.

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M. Charito Kruvant
President & CEO