

## MALAWI: Creative's Education Division Wins Bid to Bolster Teacher Education and Impact Learners



WASHINGTON, D.C. – March 15, 2010 -- Creative Associates International, in partnership with RTI International and Seward Inc., has been awarded the U.S. Agency for International Development's Teacher Professional Development Support Program to develop a framework for continuous teacher training in Malawi. The Program will be implemented by Creative's Education, Mobilization and Communication division, a recognized international leader in teacher education and policy initiatives.

USAID's Teacher Professional Development Program (MTPDS) will build on the successes of previous programs sponsored by the Government of Malawi, USAID and other donors to provide Malawians with robust targeted support in basic education. This new program is designed to provide unified teacher training and continuous professional development and distance learning. In this way, a larger number of teachers can be trained and supported to enable their students to develop early literacy and numeracy skills. With these skills, it is anticipated that students will become independent learners, contributing to higher levels of retention and completion in primary schools.

Creative President and CEO, Charito Krivant, said "We welcome this opportunity to support USAID and the government of Malawi in keeping shared commitments to the children who will benefit from this investment."

Malawians chose a brighter future for their children in the 1990s by making basic education free, leading to dramatic increases in enrollment. While the tremendous demand for education is promising for the future of the country, the influx of millions of students has exacerbated the shortage of qualified teachers. Teachers, despite being trained in participatory methods, struggle to teach large classes, affecting student learning in literacy and numeracy as well as their retention rates. According to an

Assessment by USAID in 2008, of the nearly 3.6 million students enrolled in primary school in 2008 only 55% will complete primary school. Of those that do, less than 40% will go to secondary school.

Malawian educators will lead this effort through a policy dialogue, creating a framework that ensures priorities for future actions are addressed by those who work in the system. Under USAID's leadership, the Creative team will introduce teacher education, development and management approaches that support institutional, financial, and human resource requirements. A comprehensive picture of the current system will inform the Teacher Professional Development Program. A teacher education monitoring system will be integrated with the country's Education Sector Policy, Planning and Management Information Systems (EMIS). This will provide Malawi's Ministry of Education Science and Technology with reliable data to maximize its investments in teacher training and support. Finally, the Creative team will provide HIV/AIDS programming for schools, education personnel, and orphans and vulnerable children to maintain a healthy lifestyle, cope with care for persons living with AIDS, and to understand and avoid risky behaviors.

"We look forward to implementing this very complex, multi-faceted project and assisting the Government of Malawi in reforming the primary education system and improving the quality of education for its children, improving their literacy and numeracy skills and helping them become independent learners," said Creative's MTPDS Project Director Deepika Chawla.

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