



asia

APEP: AFGHANS DRIVEN BY COMMITMENT TO IMPROVING EDUCATION

When M. Charito Kruvant, Creative Associates' President and CEO, met the senior teacher of a village school in the Kapisa province of Afghanistan, she was surprised by the woman's good cheer—worn on a smile with just a few teeth, a reminder of a beating she withstood at the hands of local men enforcing the hard-line Taliban regime's ban on teaching girls.

"We really don't need teeth, after all—not as much as we need education," the woman told Mrs. Kruvant, who added, "I thought that was just remarkable."

The indomitable Afghan spirit committed to education characterized Mrs. Kruvant's four-day visit in late April to schools served by the Afghanistan Primary Education Program (APEP). The program is funded by the U.S. Agency for International Development and managed by Creative Associates.

All around, students, parents, teachers, administrators and education officials brimmed with hope of revitalizing education in their country, Mrs. Kruvant said.

Her visit "was a reminder about how resilient Afghans are, especially little kids, who, though many of them had been seriously injured in wartime, were always active, reading and playing," said Mrs. Kruvant, who visited three schools at which APEP is helping Afghan educators train teachers and teach overage students—those denied education due to years of war—on an accelerated basis.

Afghans' high regard for education also could be seen in the stern, bearded face of an imam who has made his mosque in Kapisa, about 60 kilometers north of Kabul, available for use by local teachers as a school for boys and girls. Such largesse would have brought a strong rebuke from the Taliban, but the imam's



PHOTO BY CHARLIE ALLMAN

Creative President and CEO M. Charito Kruvant listens to a boy's response to a math question in a third-grade accelerated-learning class in Kapisa, Afghanistan. Mrs. Kruvant visited Afghanistan in April 2005. The school where the class is held is run by Coordination of Humanitarian Assistance, a local partner of the Afghanistan Primary Education Program, which is funded by USAID and managed by Creative.

quiet nods of approval as he walked through the makeshift school signaled to Mrs. Kruvant that commitment to education now reaches every layer of Afghan society.

Mrs. Kruvant also had high praise for Creative's APEP staff of Afghans, Americans and other nationals as well

as for those who work for the project's five local partner organizations. Their contribution to overcoming the impact of war and privation on Afghanistan's education system, she said, "demonstrate real teamwork and commitment and a sense of cohesion."

— Joseph Boris

APEP FACTS

APEP has scored successes in each of the project's components—accelerated learning, teacher training, textbook production and distribution, and support to the Afghan Ministry of Education. Among results achieved so far:

- The series *It's Great to Learn!*, part of APEP's Radio Teacher Training program, has been rated among the most-listened-to local radio shows in Afghanistan, according to a survey.
- At least 26 radio stations across Afghanistan broadcast 12 hours of teacher-training programming each month in two languages, Dari and Pashto.
- To date, 10,000 teachers representing 17 of Afghanistan's 34 provinces have taken APEP's certificate-bearing radio training course, to enhance their classroom skills.
- About 6,800 teachers taking part in the accelerated-learning component receive special training on how to present two years of instruction in one year. Twice a year, 54 teachers selected to be master trainers are coached in how to cover a year's content in one semester. Through a "cascade" style of training, these master trainers train 680 provincial trainers, each of whom then trains 10 participating provincial teachers, leading to 400 mentors in each province APEP operates.
- Almost 170,000 students—56 percent of them girls—in 17 Afghan provinces are enrolled in the accelerated-learning program. With the goal to move students into government schools, 6,800 village teachers have been trained to lead accelerated-learning classes.



PHILIPPINES: EQUALLS ENRICHING MINDANAO'S YOUTH WITH EDUCATION

Twenty-year-old Abduhasan Addamin has been no stranger to hardship.

Raised by his widowed mother, Abduhasan was determined to get an education. At age 10 he began selling fish in a town on the Philippine island of Mindanao, working long hours to earn enough to help his family while attending school.

But by the time he was a junior in high school, Abduhasan had to drop out to earn a living full time. Through it all, he held fast to his dream of a college education.

Like Abduhasan, 13-year-old Ruby Lakkaw dreams of an education. She wants to become a teacher. But her dream appeared to slip from her grasp when she had to drop out of fifth grade a few years ago because her father could no longer support the family. "I really want to be a teacher so I can help other kids," she says.

Until recently, Abduhasan and Ruby believed their chances for higher education were lost. Now they have renewed hope and opportunities.

In the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (ARMM), at the southern tip of the Philippines, 5,650 students from ages 12 to 20 are enrolled in a newly launched program that gives students like Abduhasan and Ruby another avenue toward higher learning.

Known as Accreditation and Equivalency Support for Out-of-School Children and Youth (ACCESS), the program is administered by the Philippine Department of Education and supported by Education Quality and Access for Learning and Livelihood Skills (EQuALLS), a project of the U.S. Agency for International Development. Creative

Associates and its partners—the Philippine and ARMM education departments, the U.S. Peace Corps, the Asia America Initiative and six alliances with private foundations and firms—are implementing EQuALLS on USAID's behalf.

"A teacher told me that a program for out-of-school youth was being offered. I immediately took the entrance exam and passed, so I'm now enrolled in the program," Abduhasan says, clearly encouraged by the opportunity to resume his studies. "I'll be able to finish my high school education."

In the ARMM, 133,000 out of 550,000 school-age youths are dropouts, according to Macalinog Saligoin, assistant regional secretary of the ARMM Department of Education. Only 61 percent of people age 10 and above in the region can read and write, compared with 75 percent in all of Mindanao, and 86 percent in Luzon and 81 percent in the Visayas—the two other major island groups in the Philippines.

The ARMM provinces of Basilan, Lanao del Sur, Maguindanao, Sulu and Tawi-Tawi consistently score lowest in national standardized exams. In these places,

extreme poverty and a dearth of resources for education have narrowed the options for thousands of young boys and girls. Many of them turn to crime and armed conflict, Mindanao analysts say.

Ruby attends classes through ACCESS twice a week at a nearby school and looking forward to English class, her favorite.

Alternative-learning classes similar to those Ruby and Abduhasan attend have been organized in the municipalities of Bongao, Simunul and Sitangkay in Tawi-Tawi; Kapatagan in Lanao del Sur; Buldon,

Barira, Parang, North Upi and South Upi in Maguindanao; and Lantawan and Maluso in Basilan. A total of 200 classes are under way this year, with a similar number planned for 2006.

"We are providing out-of-school youth access to quality basic education through nonformal learning, and an equivalency and accreditation scheme to give qualified participants the equivalent of an elementary or high school diploma, or the opportunity to return to the formal school system at their appropriate level of competency," explained



PHOTO BY: CREATIVE ASSOCIATES

Francis J. Ricciardone, U.S. Ambassador to the Philippines (center), visited the EQuALLS office of Creative associates in Cotabato City, Mindanao, on April 27, 2005.

Struggling with poverty and the long-term effects of violent conflict, the children of Mindanao are now waging another war-against illiteracy. In the ARMM, two out of 10 students who enroll in elementary school either drop out or fail to enroll the following year. The ARMM's dropout rate at the primary-school level is 24 percent, more than triple the Philippine average. At the secondary level in regions IX, XII and the ARMM, about 65 percent of school-age youth—a staggering 500,000 young people—are not in school.

PHILIPPINES: EQUALLS ENRICHING MINDANAO'S YOUTH WITH EDUCATION

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Scott Bellard, acting deputy chief of mission of the U.S. Embassy in Manila, at the recent launching of ACCESS classes in Bongao, in Tawi-Tawi.

Training is being provided for 100 instructional managers (teachers) who will help students earn accreditation and equivalency through the Department of Education's Nonformal Education Accreditation and Equivalency Test and the Philippine Educational Placement Test.

Modules integrate the learning of basic numeracy and literacy with technical and vocational skills, job referrals and networking to help ensure that participants are employable.

Response to the alternative-learning program in these remote ARMM communities has been overwhelming, says Myrna Lim, executive director of the Notre Dame Foundation for Charitable Activities, a Philippine nongovernmental organization. "We were initially aiming for 5,000 learners, but now we have 5,650. A lot more are wait-listed," she says.

Lim credits the strong demand to cooperation among program implementers, local governments and support from the students' families. Community orientation sessions have been conducted to inform parents about the importance of education as well as their role and responsibility in ensuring their children's schooling. At the ACCESS launch, the mayors of 11 ARMM municipalities signed a pledge of commitment to the objectives of the EQUALLS project, stating, "We firmly believe that education is a basic, fundamental right."



School children in Lomlom (above) and Takunel Barangay (below) in Mindanao gain new skills through EQUALLS.



PHOTOS BY:
CREATIVE ASSOCIATES

"Universal access to education is essential to strengthen democracy and to combat terrorism and the other crimes that so afflict Filipinos," Bellard says. "A better-educated work force will help attract increased investment and create new jobs. Better and more accessible education will also help Mindanao's residents participate more fully in the national, regional and global economies, and take charge of their own destinies."

Creative Associates awarded the Notre Dame Foundation a grant to implement the alternative-learning program, with the charity and its local nongovernmental partners contributing 25 percent of the cost. These partners are the Muslim Upliftment Foundation of Tawi-Tawi, the Bangsamoro Youth Ranao Center for Peace and Development, the Federation of United Mindanaoan Bangsamoro Women's Multipurpose Cooperative, the Nagdilaab Foundation and the Christian Children's Fund/Basilan.

Launched last year, EQUALLS is a five-year, \$30.1 million project that unites USAID partners from government, civil society and business to improve access to and quality of education and livelihood skills in areas affected by conflict and poverty on Mindanao.

EQUALLS is also aimed at strengthening the role of local institutions in providing education services. In addition to alternative-learning opportunities such as ACCESS, the project supports major improvements in Mindanao's public primary and secondary schools.

"A teacher told me that a program for out-of-school youth was being offered. I immediately took the entrance exam and passed, so I'm now enrolled in the program."

Abduhasan Addamin



“Communication.” Yves Colon doesn't hesitate when asked to name his biggest challenge leading Creative's Media Assistance and Civic Education project in Haiti.

It's a fitting answer regarding a project that supports community radio stations across the nation.

Colon, chief of party for RAMAK, the Creole acronym by which the project is commonly known, says Haiti's mountainous terrain, and the rural isolation and technical limitations of most stations, makes information-sharing difficult. The stations, most of which run on solar power, lack phones, fax machines and computers; the Haitian postal system is slow and unreliable.

So the written, hand-carried message—sender and receiver usually agree to meet midway between their points of departure—is the only regular way Colon and others in the project office in Port-au-Prince, Haiti's capital, can communicate with partner stations. Site visits are made, but with 40 far-flung outlets to monitor, these are rare.

Fortunately, each station is kept on the air by local radio enthusiasts committed to community service and adept at getting the most out of aging equipment and their neighbors' cash donations. RAMAK, funded by the U.S. Agency for International Development and implemented by Creative, is helping increase the knowledge and skills of the staffs at these community-owned stations, including their journalists.

The project also paid for the purchase of basic studio and transmission equipment to increase community stations' broadcast ranges and improve their on-air sound. Power supplies have been made more reliable with the purchase of solar panels and inverters that can store electricity in batteries for use during power outages. To date, equipment has been installed at 35 stations, with station staffers trained to use and maintain it. Training in fund-raising and management also has been provided.

For Colon, the development of both Haitian media and the country as a

whole has special significance. As a teenager in the 1960s he immigrated to the United States with his parents, later earning a bachelor's degree from Brooklyn College and master's degrees in journalism and French literature from the University of Missouri.

Colon has spent most of his working life as a journalist, including 11 years as a *Miami Herald* reporter in the 1980s and '90s, during which he covered the overthrow of Haitian strongman Jean-Claude Duvalier. He also reported from his native land for the Associated Press, supervised news programs for the Voice of America's Creole-language service, worked for the Little Haiti Housing Association in Miami and co-founded *The Haitian Times*, an English-language newspaper serving the Haitian-American community.

The fluent Creole and French speaker, who took the helm of RAMAK in June 2003, is proud to be a part of Haitians' efforts to stabilize their long-volatile country, such as by helping radio journalists hone their craft and thus keep communities informed about political and social developments.

“I spent a lot of time writing about what is wrong with Haiti. Now I want to find out what I can do to help with what is right in Haiti,” Colon says. He adds that community radio stations' “raison d'être is the education of their listeners on issues of health, the environment, agriculture, governance.”

A group of farmers on the outskirts of the western Haitian city of Saint-Marc recently described for a RAMAK staff member the bond between a community and its radio station: “If the radio burns, the population's ears are blocked.” The station the farmers listen to, Radio Tèt a tèt (Working Together Radio), has as its slogan, “Give people without speech a voice.”



PHOTO BY: KIM CLARK

RAMAK Chief of Party Yves Colon, left, congratulates Francky Depestre, director of Radio Kominotè Bèlans, an FM station in southeastern Haiti that RAMAK supports, on an award received at a national community radio conference in January 2005.

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HAITI: YVES COLON SEES HAITI THROUGH 'NEW EYES'

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To help stations serve their communities, Colon and his RAMAK colleagues have also assisted with production of public affairs programming—in the form of drama series, interviews with political leaders and other newsmakers, and town hall-style discussions. The project estimates that its partner stations, on average, have doubled the number of hours dedicated to public affairs, including a mix of locally produced content and programs developed by RAMAK and other international organizations.

With RAMAK's conclusion looming this September, Colon says he would like to outfit as many stations as need them with additional photovoltaic (solar energy) panels so they can boost their electrical supplies. This enables stations to stay on the air longer; since the project began, RAMAK has helped its partner stations go from an average of six hours on air each day to 10 hours per day.

"It's exciting to see the progress we've made in community radio," he says. "We're beginning to transform people's lives, and I've been able to see Haiti through new eyes."

For evidence of community radio's influence, Colon cites an incident involving Radio Kominotè Bèlans

(RKB), an FM station in Haiti's southeast, in the weeks before the February 2004 overthrow of President Jean-Bertrand Aristide. The local mayor, angered by RKB's reporting on alleged corruption in his police department, sued the station director and sent "goons" to force RKB off the air. To appease the mayor, the director shut down the station temporarily—long enough to convene a meeting with Colon, a USAID officer and about 60 listeners, who spoke of their reliance on the station for information and a sense of community. They also pointed out that RKB is owned and run by the community, not a private business interest out to settle political scores.

"After a three-hour meeting, the station was reopened," Colon recalls. "The director had managed to discuss with the police chief and the prosecuting attorney the nature of the allegations of [police] corruption that the station had received from listeners. And the authorities decided it would be in their best interest, politically and in terms of the community's perception, to reopen the station."

Further U.S. assistance to develop Haiti's community radio sector has yet to be decided, but Colon has a wish list that includes a digital recording device at every station so that local program-

"We're beginning to transform people's lives, and I've been able to see Haiti through new eyes."

Yves Colon

ming can be stored and shared with other stations, and an Internet-based link by which to transmit the programs.

He is confident that each station will be able and willing to provide a crucial service in Haiti's nationwide elections, slated for October and November: calming public tensions in what's expected to be a hard-fought, possibly violent, campaign following the ouster of Aristide.

—Joseph Boris

Radio Tèt à Tèt, in the western Haitian city of Saint-Marc, is among 40 community radio stations across Haiti supported by RAMAK, a USAID-funded project that Creative implements. The station, which features programming about civic education and Haiti's development, had to be partly rebuilt after it was torched by supporters of Jean Bertrand Aristide following his ouster as president in January 2004. Tèt à Tèt's owner went into exile in the Dominican Republic, returning to his station in May 2004.

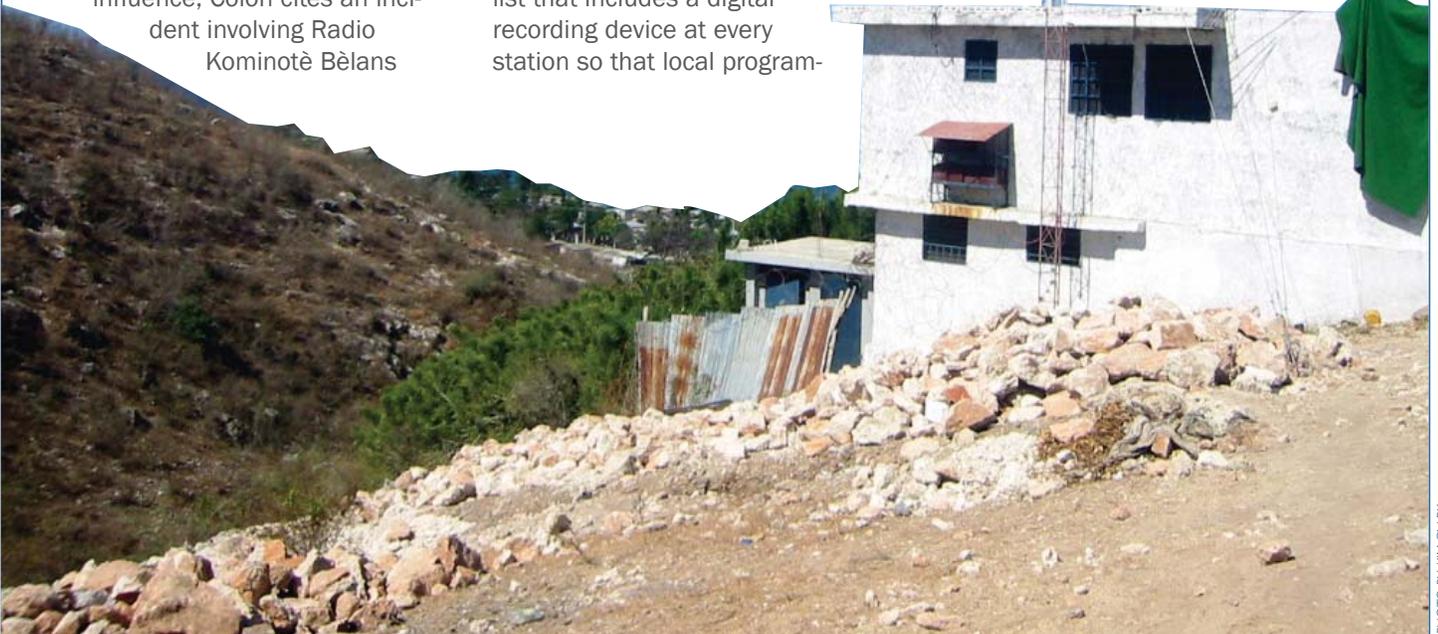


PHOTO BY: KIM CLARK



GHANA: COCOA'S STRONGHOLD ON CHILD WORKERS

“What you're looking for is people valuing education and as a result keeping their kids in school.”

Archer Heinzen



Female students in Ghana's Sewi Wiwso district study with educational booklets produced by the Youth Education and Skills project, which works with child laborers in the cocoa industry.



A class of child laborers from Ghana's cocoa industry study under a cocoa tree. The class is sponsored by the Youth Education and Skills project, which focuses on changing hazardous practices in cocoa production, providing literacy and life-skills classes, and raising awareness of issues associated with HIV/AIDS.

PHOTOS BY: ARCHER HEINZEN

Most of us remember the eccentric Willy Wonka, a character who owns a fantastic chocolate factory, befriends a poor boy named Charlie and bequeaths the factory to him. The story paints chocolate as the ultimate candy experience in one dazzling sight after another.

But the true story of chocolate is a bitter affair involving the toil and cheap labor of children on cocoa farms.

The West African nation of Ghana depends on cocoa for 20 percent of its export earnings. A mostly rural, agricultural country, small farm holders

depend on the labor of family members including children and adolescents to process cocoa. In the Sewi Wiwso District, one of the largest cocoa-producing districts in Ghana, children account for 61 percent of the work force. For these children and youths, chocolate is not the stuff of Willy Wonka's fantastic vision—it is a source of hazardous work that keeps them out of school.

To minimize the threats to children's safety in cocoa production, which can involve cuts from machetes or falls from trees, Creative Associates' Education to Combat Child Labor team developed and managed a pilot project geared to the needs of children working in cocoa production in Sewi Wiwso.

The project, Youth Education and Skills (YES), seeks to assist out-of-school youths between ages 12 and 17 with a worker safety curriculum, using literacy as an entry point. The project, implemented by CARE International, focuses on changing hazardous practices in cocoa production, literacy and life skills classes, and raising awareness of issues surrounding HIV and AIDS.

YES is a pioneering project whose focus goes beyond concern about exploitation. It is an attempt to address the educational needs of youths working in agricultural production by integrating knowledge about hazardous cocoa production practices and child labor rights into educational materials. Because these youths have to work out of economic necessity, YES helps bridge the gaps in education and other life skills to improve their circumstances.

The project produced educational materials covering the teaching of English, math, science and life skills. The most highly rated component of YES was its radio public service announcements and dramas produced to teach parents and children about Ghanaian child labor laws and the importance of education and occupational safety. The radio programs captured the attention of its target audience by starting each broadcast with

the song lyrics: “Cocoa is the stronghold of the economy/Our children are the stronghold of our future/So let our children go to school, Lord/Give the children education, and change the situation.”

The educational materials and dramas developed under YES ease the burden on child workers and accommodated beneficiaries by holding its literacy classes at night so that pupils could attend after their workday. Jeboah Issac Kwame, 17, said the YES teachers “teach us to manage a cocoa farm, and since we haven't gotten the opportunity to further our educations, [YES] keeps us learning. The teachers are patient. They explain things so that we can understand.”

YES classes have been held in 15 rural villages in the Sefwi-Wawso District and reached 429 children and youths. Launched in May 2003, the project ended in April 2005.

According to Archer Heinzen, who managed the project for Creative, YES accomplished its objectives. “There were numerous cases of out-of-children being put back into formal school as a result of the literacy program. And there was a general positive effect in the realm of education,” she said. “What you're looking for is people valuing education and as a result keeping their kids in school.”

The impact of YES is being seen in the establishment of two schools since the project ended. In another community, land has been donated to establish a school.

While the thousands of Ghanaian children who work in cocoa production may not find chocolate to be as wondrous as their peers elsewhere, projects such as YES make their working lives less bitter as it guides them towards literacy, occupational safety and health and life skills management.

—Alexandra Pratt



GUATEMALA: COMMUNITY GRANT AIMS TO DRAW YOUTHS AWAY FROM GANGS

A crime prevention council in Guatemala will see its work aided by a \$10,000 grant designed to help prevent young people from joining gangs and decrease crime.

The grant, issued by the Creative Associates-managed Youth Alliance Program, is meant to assist the council in Villa Nueva, a town near Guatemala City with high rates of crime and poverty, in working with at-risk-youths on the margins of society due to poverty, unstable homes and membership in gangs. The grant will cover activities such as the sponsorship of soccer tournaments, campaigns to raise public awareness about preventing violence, implementation of community service projects including cleaning and painting community murals, the celebration of "family day," and training for local leaders and students on crime prevention methods. The activities will both educate at-risk youths about the pitfalls of gang life and help begin to build a sense of community among young people.

Villa Nueva's is one of many grants that will be disbursed to local crime prevention councils throughout Guatemala. Youth Alliance Program grants are funded by the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) through its Global Development Alliance (GDA), which unites the public and private sectors to tackle development challenges. Signed on April 25, the Villa Nueva grant comes from an \$800,000 GDA award that is expected to leverage \$1.3 million for Youth Alliance Program activities from private interests in Guatemala and abroad.

Private interest in the program stems from its aim of reducing gang membership and crime—a benefit for the entire community, including businesses. "The program is innovative in its approach as it aims to be preventive not punitive, encouraging youth to engage in meaningful transition toward a life without violence," said Siena

Fleischer, a program associate for Creative Associates who helps oversee the program.

Limited opportunities in education, job training and employment have left an estimated 5 million young Guatemalans disenfranchised, including some 150,000 who have turned to gangs. As a result, communities have been besieged by crime. Instead of relying on punitive measures against at-risk youths, the Youth Alliance Program works to integrate former and



A former gang member seizes new opportunities.



Through the Youth Alliance Program these at-risk youths can learn to avoid gang life.

PHOTOS BY: DONNA DECESARE

current gang members into society by providing technical assistance to local crime prevention councils, which develop job skills training and income-generating opportunities for vulnerable young people.

Because of the program's approach and its early successes, it has garnered the attention not only of business leaders but also government officials, including the U.S. ambassador to Guatemala, John Hamilton, who has expressed support for the program.

About 5,000 at-risk youths are expected to benefit from program grants aimed at preventing gang membership and helping ex-gang members contribute to society in a more productive manner.

In Villa Nueva, where the grant to the crime prevention council runs through November 2005, the council will focus on decreasing the number of victims of crime and creating effective and sustainable conditions for crime prevention.

The signing ceremony was attended by Salvador Gandara and Todd Amani of the USAID mission in Guatemala; Fenando Herrera, national president of Guatemala's crime prevention councils; Harold Sibaja, Creative Associates' regional director for Latin America and the Caribbean; Guatemalan government officials including Ruben Chaben, director general for extracurricular education; and heads of local crime prevention councils.

At its conclusion in March 2006, the Youth Alliance Program will have provided technical assistance to nearly 1,300 at-risk youths and employment opportunities for 158 youths.

—Alexandra Pratt

About 5,000 at-risk youths are expected to benefit from program grants aimed at preventing gang membership and helping ex-gang members contribute to society in a more productive manner.



GUATEMALA: FORMER GANG MEMBERS GET SECOND CHANCE

Heavily tattooed ex-gang members hold hands and form a circle in an effort to bond.

An unlikely scene, but one that reveals how far these young men have come in trying to start new lives.

It also serves as the opening to “Just Give Me a Chance,” a short film that chronicles the activities of Creative Associates' Youth Alliance Program, through which the Association for the Prevention of Crime (or APREDE, its Spanish acronym) offers opportunities to former gang members and other at-risk youth in Guatemala.

Zeroing in on ex-gang member Juan Carlos, the film shows his tattooed torso, face and hands as he relates his initiation into gang life: “My name is Juan Carlos Lopez Giron. I'm 25 years old. I started to live on the street when I was 4; when I was 11, I went into a trial with a gang called 18th. I started to walk with them. I got to know them. They put me in a trial period, and when I was 12 I was fully a member.”

According to “Just Give Me a Chance,” Carlos and others like him voluntarily seek change but are constrained by a society that ostracizes them for their involvement in gangs and the threat of retribution from gang members unwilling to let the young men reintegrate into normal life. APREDE's mission is to provide opportunities for disadvantaged adolescents by creating a network of youth and rehabilitation centers that promote social integration and the positive use of free time, including sports, cultural activities and citizen participation.

While APREDE is focused on at-risk young people in poor neighborhoods on the outskirts of Guatemala City, the problem of gangs transcends international boundaries. From Guatemala to Los Angeles to Washington, D.C., and beyond, the streets is a venue for disenfranchised youth seeking refuge

from troubled homes, abuse and the hopelessness wrought by lack of opportunities and limited education.

While the pursuit of a conventional life, with education and job opportunities, is a challenge for the ex-gang members, the films shows several examples of how APREDE is positively affecting the lives of these at-risk youths. Because of APREDE the president of Guatemala, Oscar Berger, has donated the presidential ranch as a youth center where young people from around the country come for training and participation in activities. With a safe place to go to, young people are more likely to stay off the street and resist recruitment into gangs. And with training and job opportunities, they are less likely to suffer prejudice from citizens who associate them with crime.

“They just gave me my APREDE identification card,” Hans Uriza, a former member of the 18th Street gang. “I have the support of APREDE and other institutions that see that stick with you. Before, I was ashamed to speak, but now I'm not. Before, I was quiet, but now I lift my face because it's an honor to be able to say that I'm changing and that I'm helping other youth to change.”

Controlling gangs requires a balance between law enforcement and community-based crime prevention, with support from the private sector. APREDE works with crime prevention councils in communities to help reduce crime. As a preventive measure, the program goes into schools to teach at-risk children about the pitfalls of gang membership.

Recognizing their self-interest in reducing crime and making a commitment to expand opportunities for the less advantaged, private sector donors such as Microsoft and local Guatemalan businesses provide equipment and job training for ex-gang members.



PHOTO BY: JUAN JOSE HERNANDEZ

This mural, painted by hundreds of former gang members and at-risk youths in Huehuetenango, Guatemala, celebrates the young artists' self-expression and involvement in socially constructive activities.

Through its efforts to build community networks around schools, youth centers, crime prevention councils and job opportunities, APREDE and Creative have begun to see positive changes-and a desire among many youth to move away from gang life.

Despite demonstrating APREDE's successes, “Just Give Me a Chance” ends on a bitter note. In the film's last scene, former gang member Jairon Barrayo, 22, is singing about violence and its futility. The film's credits reveal that Barrayo was killed by another gang member in January 2005.

—Alexandra Pratt

To get a copy of the video “Just Give Me a Chance,” please contact Lazarina Todorova at LazarinaT@caii.com



NEW FACES IN WASHINGTON, D.C.



T. Daniel Baker joins Creative's Field Operations Unit as a management associate and works closely with Field

Operations Manager Jeff Gould. Daniel is a seasoned operations manager and health educator with experience in the public and private sectors, operations design and implementation, logistics management, infectious-disease prevention and health of refugees and internally displaced persons. He has managed field operations in Africa, Asia and Latin America, on projects in environmental health and health services. Daniel's private-sector experience includes work as a business development consultant for the governments of the United States and Spain and serving as director of two successful Ibero-American start-up companies. A native of Richmond, Virginia, Daniel has been a Peace Corps volunteer, Botswana Red Cross health volunteer and a certified emergency medical technician. He has a master's degree in international affairs from Ohio University and a master's in public health from the University of Arizona.



Patricia Bell joins Creative as director of human resources and brings to the position more than 25 years' experience in

international development. Before Creative, she was HR director at the Vietnam Veterans of America Foundation. Her career also includes

heading HR for the Centre for Development and Population Activities. Patricia received certification as a senior human resource professional through the Society for Human Resource Management. Her experience includes strategic HR planning, full-cycle recruitment for domestic and overseas positions, compensation and benefits administration, employee relations, statutory compliance, budgets, training, performance management, organizational development, team-building and conflict resolution.



Michelle Cullen joins Creative's Communities in Transition division as a senior associate. She previously worked

for the U.S. Government Accountability Office (GAO), where she was the lead auditor of the State Department and USAID in an evaluation of the U.S. government's ability to identify, monitor and counter Saudi Arabia's propagation of religious extremism. Before her GAO work, Michelle spent 6½ years at the World Bank as a post-conflict specialist. She created conflict-analysis tools, trained local staff, and conducted social impact and risk assessments for military demobilization, reconstruction and social rehabilitation projects in Algeria, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Djibouti, Rwanda and the Philippines. Michelle earned a bachelor's degree in international studies and political science from Miami University of Ohio and a master's degree in anthropology from the University of Melbourne in Australia. Her publications have been incorpo-

rated into the curricula of Tufts, George Washington and Columbia universities.



Lenoure Mullaney joins Creative's Business Development Unit as a proposal coordinator. Before Creative, she

was a proposal coordinator and project associate for the economic development, governance and environment division of DevTech Systems Inc. Before that, Lenoure worked for the National Association of Chain Drug Stores, where she led the trade group's efforts on proposals to expand international activities with USAID and the U.S. Commerce Department. As a Peace Corps volunteer for more than two years in Togo, she conducted participatory community assessments to determine project goals and activities, and designed and taught village leaders to manage environmentally sound rural community development initiatives. Lenoure earned a bachelor's degree in French and print journalism from American University in Washington, D.C. She is fluent in French and proficient in Spanish and Cotokoli.

PHOTOS BY:
LAZARINA TODOROVA

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PHOTO OF THE SEASON



PHOTO BY: CREATIVE ASSOCIATES

Members of various Guatemalan youth councils and Creative's Youth Alliance Program sit before a mural painted for a contest by former gang members and at-risk youths. The contest theme, "Live Life" helped elicit positive self-expression.

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