



Washington, DC

C²S²: CREATIVE LAUNCHES THE CREATIVE CENTER FOR SECURITY AND STABILIZATION

Creative Associates has recently established the Creative Center for Security and Stabilization, also known as C²S². This initiative seeks to identify critical intersections of the development and security nexus as they will shape our conduct of development activities worldwide.

C²S² seeks to play a leadership role in both the intellectual and operational roles of this emerging and important new dimension in foreign assistance.

Professor John Stuart Blackton, a Senior Advisor to the initiative, notes that “the Center is built around the central pillar of General David Petraeus’ newly promulgated U.S. Army and Marine doctrine for winning-the-peace in long conflicts. The core values of C²S² involve approaches that are people-centered, locally-owned, based on democratic norms and internationally accepted human rights principles and the rule of law, and which contribute to an environment characterized by freedom from fear.

“The Creative Center for Security and Stabilization provides an institutional framework to structure thinking (and subsequent action) about how to address diverse security challenges through more integrated security and stabilization policies, and how to build effective, fast-mobilizing instruments to implement these policies,” Professor Blackton said.

Creative’s work to improve security at local, regional and national levels has included community policing/public security;



PHOTO BY: LANCE CPL. RYAN BUSSE, UNITED STATES MARINE CORPS.

CREATIVE’S CENTER FOR SECURITY AND STABILIZATION WILL HELP CLOSE THE CIVILIAN AND MILITARY GAP.

anti-gang and youth-at-risk programs; demobilization, reinsertion and reintegration, and national strategic planning assistance. Creative also has extensive training experience and is well-versed in cutting-edge training methodologies that have proven effective in difficult settings.

Creative also possesses significant experience collaborating with U.S. military and multi-national forces in conflict and post-conflict environments. This experience, ranging from the policy to tactical levels, is well-suited for training. More than helping to bridge the cultural divide between civilian and military entities – which often pursue parallel initiatives at best, and frequently counter-productive efforts – Creative staff have designed programs that serve both short-term force protection needs and lay the foundation for longer-term sustainable development.

For more information about the Creative Center for Security and Development C²S² please contact Creative Senior Advisor John Blackton at JohnB@caii.com.

“The primary focus in a conflict or post-conflict environment has to involve processes and community engagement in such a way that identifies a common set of values and builds on those values in creating local institutions.”

Dick McCall
Senior VP of Programs
Creative Associates

CREATIVE initiatives

SUDAN: Creative Undertakes Elections Assessment

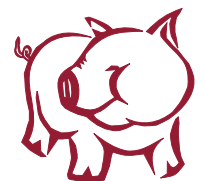
HAITI: Radio Serial Promotes HIV/AIDS Dialogue

ALGERIA: Creative and MEPI Make Math Fun Using ICTs

UGANDA: Creative Launches Thematic Curriculum

OPEN HOUSE

*A YEAR OF COURAGE,
PROSPERITY AND
GENEROSITY*



Year of the Pig



KENYA: SHANNON FISCHER NAMED CREATIVE'S EAST AFRICA REGIONAL REPRESENTATIVE

Shannon Fischer brings her Africa expertise to Creative's East Africa Regional Office (EARO) where she will represent the firm before clients, governments, and other stakeholders in the development of new business opportunities to serve the needs of donors and their clients across the region.

Creative has a strategic role to play in East Africa and the firm is poised to offer new strategies and methodologies for projects to help communities in transition and provide education services during conflict and in post-conflict environments.

Having spent the past seven years in West Africa, Fischer brings a continent-wide perspective to Creative's education and transition efforts that have spanned in Algeria, Morocco, South Africa, Uganda, Somaliland, Egypt, Malawi, Nigeria, Southern Sudan and Zambia.

"Creative is a firm at the forefront of new thinking and ideas and our presence in Nairobi is an entry to new and innovative strategies," says Fischer who was named the firm's EARO representative in January. Creative established the EARO in 2004. "Nairobi is a hub of the international community for much of Africa."

Fischer is former chief of party for the Liberia Transition Initiative, funded by the U.S. Agency for International Development's Office of Transition Initiatives. She oversaw activities that included grants, life skills and accelerated learning classes for youths with the goal of helping communities recover after Liberia's devastating civil war.

"The experience in Liberia brings a lot of lessons learned and a lot of good examples of appropriate intervention in transitional environments that can be applied to other situations such as Somalia," Fischer says. "Liberia was a very difficult working environment. The Liberia project brings a very grounded understanding of operational challenges to working in remote areas affected by long-term war, such as Sudan and Somalia."

Fischer has also been appointed project director of USAID's Strategic Participatory Town Planning (SPTP) project in Southern Sudan. Launched in June 2004, the project combines urban planning with civil society building. Geared to helping the Government of Southern Sudan (GoSS) meet critical town planning issues, SPTP has provided the GoSS with assessments for town planning and resource allocation with recommendations for settling land rights issues and the reintegration of war-affected returnees and landless poor. SPTP's newly created maps including Southern Sudan's first GIS reference of 10 key cities will further assist the GoSS in meeting its needs for planning physical infrastructure.

"We are certainly at a strategic advantage by having a project in Southern Sudan and knowing its logistical capabilities and understanding the operating climate," especially in the three key towns of Juba, Wau and Malakal, Fischer says.

In October 2006, Creative launched a second Sudan project. HEAR Sudan will link community members, state and local authorities, educators and health workers



"The experience in Liberia brings a lot of lessons learned and a lot of good examples of appropriate intervention in transitional environments that can be applied to other situations such as Somalia."

Shannon Fischer
EARO Regional
Representative

in their efforts to establish sustainable access to quality education and health services. Among its many activities, the project will provide Accelerated Learning classes to students whose education have been interrupted, expanding on Creative's success implementing Accelerated Learning in Afghanistan, Liberia, Guatemala and Iraq.

Dick McCall, Creative's Senior Vice President of Programs, is also currently serving as a nation-building expert to Somalia's policy makers through the United Nations Development Programme.

—Alexandra Pratt



PHOTO BY: CREATIVE ASSOCIATES

NAIROBI IS HOME TO CREATIVE'S EAST AFRICA REGIONAL OFFICE .



SUDAN: CREATIVE ASSESSMENT IDENTIFIES GAPS TO A SUCCESSFUL OUTCOME OF THE 2009 NATIONAL ELECTIONS

For Southern Sudan to hold elections by 2009, it must address critical political decisions concerning systems of representation and political processes, according to a recent Creative Associates elections assessment conducted in the east Africa nation.

The study, "Elections and the Implementation of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement, Framing the Challenges," reveals that an entire system of structures and processes including, first and foremost, legislating a national elections law and nominating a National Elections Committee (NEC) must be undertaken.

Based on more than 30 interviews with government officials and representatives of international organizations, the study provides an illustrative timeline of events and actions to be taken if the terms of the 2005 Comprehensive Peace Agreement are to be met.

Timing is also a crucial factor with potential influence on the outcome of elections and shouldn't be underestimated.

Even the weather must be considered as roads become impassable due to heavy rains from April to October. Without careful timing of key events such as voter registration and elections to coincide with the dry season from November to March – prospects for a successful election could be compromised.

The Elections assessment was conducted in October 2006 by Creative Associates' Senior Technical Advisor for Elections, Sue Nelson, to provide Southern Sudanese, the government in Khartoum and the international community with critical insights about the systems and processes needed so that fair and transparent elections can be held and a new government elected.

Creative Associates holds the U.S. Agency for International Development's Elections & Political Processes Indefinite Quantity Contract through which it can provide USAID with innovative programs and technical assistance that support

elections and political processes in post-conflict environments and emerging democracies.

"The elections in Southern Sudan represent an important feature of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement in its recognition of the role of regional governance for the country."

***Jeffrey Fischer
Team Leader
Elections and Political Processes
Creative Associates***

Two years ago, the signing of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement gave Southern Sudanese, including 4 million refugees and internally displaced persons, the hope of returning to their homes to begin rebuilding their shattered lives.

The 2005 Agreement calls for Southern Sudan to hold national elections by 2009 along with a referendum on whether to secede from the North. Indeed, resolving issues of boundaries and conducting a census appear to take greater urgency.

Simmering below the surface is the question of Abyei's boundaries, an area between the North and the South with large oil reserves. The Agreement specifies that Abyei must form an independent government and by 2011 vote on whether it wants to join the North or the South. But, according to The Washington Post, Khartoum has rejected the boundaries outlined by a special commission.

While issues of Abyei's boundaries are not vital to the 2009 elections, holding a census that will help to define electoral districts is a must. Expected to take place in November 2007, Nelson suggests the census may be combined with the voter registration process that is also to take place during the November 2007 to March 2008 dry season. Still, certain overriding logistical difficulties will remain.

Some concerns outlined by Nelson include continued population movements during voter registration and voting which will need to be factored into electoral strategic planning. "Access to voters, especially rural voters in remote areas, will be difficult given the dearth of infrastructure, communications and means of transportation. The distribution and recuperation of registration and voting materials will require good advance planning as well as ample time, as will the distribution of voter information and political campaigns. These logistical and access problems will also be faced for those ensuring election security and observing the process," notes Nelson.

"The implications of Sue Nelson's findings are that critical political decisions concerning systems of representation and political process are not being taken," Fischer said. "The failure to address these decisions in a timely way puts the timeline of the Agreement at risk."

Nelson also suggests that once the NEC has established a framework for elections, there will be a significant role for the international community to help guarantee the success of Southern Sudan's forthcoming elections.

"The international community should assume facilitating and mediating roles with Sudanese stakeholders to present options, build consensus, and encourage the Sudanese to pursue decisions according to the timeframe of the Agreement," Fischer said.

—Alexandra Pratt



HAITI: ‘LOVE AND WORRIES’ SERIAL SPURS AWARENESS OF HIV/AIDS

Mesia, a radio character well known to Haitian audiences for her tireless efforts to pursue justice in the series “Rape in Ans Marie,” has returned to the airwaves.

In a new radio soap opera, “Love and Worries,” Mesia urges her fellow Haitians to be more aware of the dangers of HIV/AIDS and to question one’s partner’s sexual habits.

“Love and Worries,” like the earlier series, will also inform and promote a social dialogue to help make HIV/AIDS prevention a national priority.

Both radio series build on Creative’s signature approach to using radio as a vehicle to inform communities about civic rights and duties, particularly in remote areas with high illiteracy rates.

“We hope that this new series will encourage young people and the sexually active population to adopt responsible practices to avoid HIV/AIDS by the adoption of abstinence and faithfulness,” said Farah Malebranche, Creative’s Chief of Party in Haiti.

Creative’s Haiti Media Assistance and Civic Education program, known as RAMAK in Creole, supported 40 community radio stations with training, civic education programming and equipment. It also helped increase radio penetration to 60 percent of the country, up from 36 percent before the project began.

Though RAMAK ended in late 2006, “Love and Worries” known as “Tèt Chaje Nan Ans Marie,” in Creole, is produced under the Creative-implemented Community Radio and HIV/AIDS Prevention Program in Haiti. The project is made possible by the U.S. Agency for International Development.

The series will also explore issues of fidelity, loyalty, methods of protection and the importance of being tested.

“Love and Worries,” builds on Mesia’s anxiety as she awaits the return of her

fiancé, Jacques, a migrant worker in the Dominican Republic. Jacques represents tens of thousands of Haitians who annually cross the border into the Dominican Republic to work in the sugar cane fields or do other hard labor. Living away from spouses or partners for months at a time may lead them to seek new or multiple sex partners and increase the risks of contracting HIV. Mesia confronts her fears that while Jacques was away, he may have contracted HIV/AIDS – as have so many others in her community.

Mesia has already lost an aunt and uncle to HIV/AIDS and wants to keep the illness from ravaging others in Ans Marie. Mesia’s civic awareness and commitment to civic rights and responsibilities spur her to action.

In one episode, Mesia is in a bar and overhears several local men debating whether condoms are necessary to protect against HIV.

The men’s conversation stokes Mesia’s anxieties about Jacques who remains reluctant to be tested. As a result of being raped, Mesia had herself tested and was found to be negative. She realizes that knowing one’s HIV/AIDS status can mean the difference between a prolonged life or an untimely death.



ACTRESS FLORANCE CELICOURT, WHO PLAYS MESIA’S MOTHER IN “LOVE AND WORRIES.”



ACTRESS NATHALIE PIERRE, WHO PLAYS MESIA, HAS CAPTURED LISTENING AUDIENCES THROUGH HER MISSION TO RAISE AWARENESS OF HIV/AIDS AMONG HAITIANS.

Despite the social taboos against speaking about HIV/AIDS, Mesia believes that it is her civic duty to engage the youth of her community in discussions about protecting themselves from the disease.

With radio being the most accessible media reaching an estimated 94 percent of Haitians, Creative’s radio soap opera series tend to use the style of Haiti’s traditional oral storytelling and include a dose of homespun wisdom and morality. Mesia’s character, created by Haitian playwright Gary Victor, continues to evolve as she encounters real-life challenges while captivating her audiences that identify with her struggle and see her as a role model.

Surveys conducted after the airing of previous Creative’s soap opera series showed that Haitians’ awareness of their rights had increased and individuals have altered their behaviors in accordance with the series’ messages.

Broadcasts of the 12-part, “Love and Worries,” begins March 5, and will air throughout Haiti on community radio stations supported by Creative’s former RAMAK project.

—Alexandra Pratt

PHOTOS BY: FARAH MALEBRANCHE



ALGERIA: MEPI AND CREATIVE MAKE LEARNING MATH FUN FOR THIRD GRADERS

For third-grade Algerian students, a math software program is not only providing an interactive learning experience, but also making math fun.

Through the U.S. State Department-sponsored Middle East Partnership Initiative, the Algerian Ministry of Education is introducing eMath into 15 pilot schools in Algiers and the province of Ghardaia.

Managed by Creative Associates International, Inc., the eMath curriculum uses the latest pedagogical methods to produce collaborative learning to attract and maintain students' attention, increase their retention and comprehension and learn to use concepts applicable to real life.

For example, third-graders may be presented with an illustration of a car without tires and asked to choose from an array of geometric shapes which can be used to form four equal car wheels.

Prior to introducing eMath into classrooms, Creative Associates' partner Rubicon, a Jordan based educational software company, trained 18 teachers and three supervisors in the uses of the software. The program will also bolster the ministry's IT capacity so that more schools can benefit from computer-based interactive programs.

Razna Nohemeré, a third grade teacher at Saladine Ayoubi Primary School in Ghardaia, received the eMath training and uses it three times a week to teach her students, saying "eMath is very effective in the classroom because the students are more engaged in learning than before. They are more eager to participate." Nohemeré notes that she likes the eMath software because it gives her more examples and exercises to share with her pupils.

Although her favorite subject is history, and she wishes it were taught by computers as well, 9-year old Fatima still agrees that "math is easy with computers," and that she likes the "bright colors and animation, and that the games are fun."

The three girls pictured are collaborating on eMath and each will take a turn at the computer to solve problems. According to Sarah Havekost who leads the Creative team in Algiers, "teachers say the software enables them to teach more efficiently and that student motivation has increased greatly."

tional reform. Along with eMath, Creative is working with partner Michigan State University to improve the English language teaching skills for Algerian middle and high school teachers. To foster better understanding between Americans and Algerians, the linkages program will connect several U.S. high schools with Algerian high schools to encourage com-



PHOTO BY: CREATIVE ASSOCIATES

ALGERIAN CHILDREN ARE LEARNING TO ENJOY MATH THROUGH THE CREATIVE EMATH PROGRAM, SPONSORED BY MEPI.

Commenting on his experience with the Creative eMath program, Mr. Nedjadi Messeguem the Ghardaia director of education noted, "that his experience with the implementation of the program has been far better than any other foreign assistance project he has been a part of." He says he has never "experienced a project so well implemented and monitored."

Based on the success of this Algeria-MEPI pilot, the ministry of education is encouraged to opt to utilize its newly learned skills and continue to implement the project on a much larger scale throughout its schools.

Introducing technology in the classroom is one of Algeria's priorities for its educa-

communications between students of both countries who will exchange community profiles and engage in other interactive activities that will result in authentic cultural exchanges. Under MEPI, Creative is also administering education activities in Oman. MEPI's programs are designed to foster modernization and reform in the region over the long term.

— Alexandra Pratt with assistance from Sarah Havekost.

"eMath is very effective in the classroom because the students are more engaged in learning than before. They are more eager to participate."

***Razna Nohemere
Teacher***



UGANDA: CREATIVE SUPPORTS EDUCATION MINISTRY IN LAUNCHING PRIMARY SCHOOL THEMATIC CURRICULUM

Creative Associates' UNITY project helped the government launch the national roll-out of a "thematic curriculum" in Uganda's schools with more than 30,000 primary teachers trained in the holistic child-friendly teaching approach just before the new school year began.

Three weeks into the school year, which began February 5th, monitoring teams report that the implementation has been successful.

"Having monitored a selection of trainings, and reviewed other monitoring reports ... the thematic curriculum is well received by the teachers," said Renuka Pillay, UNITY's Chief of Party, of her staff's monitoring efforts.

As a result of UNITY's teacher training sessions, Ugandan first-grade students began the new school year in classrooms with a curriculum taught in their native languages structured into themes of life skills, numeracy and literacy. Designed to reflect the way young children understand the world, the thematic curriculum is expected to raise literacy and math skills to acceptable levels and move Uganda further along in its goal to provide quality universal primary education to its children by 2015.

"This new way of teaching is exciting both to the teacher and the pupils! We pledge to implement the new curriculum when the term begins," said a teacher in the Kapchorwa district.

UNITY builds on Creative's previous six years of experience in Uganda under the Basic Education Policy Support activity (funded by USAID), which first collaborated with the Ministry of Education and Sports (MOES) to design and pilot the thematic curriculum. To further support this initiative, UNITY will work closely with MOES and the National Curriculum Development Centre to help implement the thematic curriculum in order to provide teachers with greater flexibility and a choice of content to reflect local needs, interests and resources.

Using a core curriculum, teachers will be able to adapt their lessons so that content is made relevant to students' environments and capable of being used by them effectively. For teachers in resource poor classrooms, the freedom to use local materials to boost lesson quality has been welcomed. Based on observations during the first week of school, the thematic curriculum training has also tapped into teachers' creativity.

"I was captivated by a teacher who kept her class lively with song followed by playtime with educational puzzles of animals, pictures, letters and cards, said a representative of Lukomera Church of Uganda Primary School, Luwero district.

Still, the introduction of the thematic curriculum into classrooms has met with some resistance from parents, leading to a national debate on educational performance and the languages used in classrooms. A major component of the thematic curriculum provides that children are taught in their native tongues, as opposed to the English instruction they received previously. This gives rise to worries among some parents that their children will not learn English—the world's dominant business language.

But using a child's own language, or first language, improves learning; attaining literacy in one's own language also improves the capacity to learn a foreign language. The return to native languages in the classroom is particularly relevant to Ugandan students. Uganda's population is multi-ethnic and multi-lingual. English will remain the language of instruction in some urban areas where it is predominant.

"Parents appreciate the new curriculum, a few complain about the local language – they prefer English. We [teachers] explain that local language provides a basis for literacy," said Susan Mabonga, Headteacher, St. Kizito Naluvule, Luwero district.



PHOTO BY: LAWRENCE NDAGIJE, UNITY PROJECT

FIRST-GRADE TEACHERS WHO WERE TRAINED IN THE THEMATIC CURRICULUM, KAPCHORWA DISTRICT, UGANDA.

For lasting impact, UNITY's monitoring of student performance will be a top priority, to create a comprehensive understanding of the effectiveness of the thematic curriculum as the appropriate educational policy reform in Uganda.

UNITY is the first Ugandan task order under Creative's Basic Education/Linkages to Education and Health initiative, known as ABE-LINK also funded by USAID.

UNITY will also expand parent-teacher involvement and community participation in education and update the ministry's policy agenda.

When it concludes in November 2009, UNITY will have enhanced the quality of education of 7 million primary school students, contributed to the training of 14,000 primary teachers and 50,000 in-service primary teachers and improved the management capabilities of 15,000 primary school administrators and district education officials.

— Uganda UNITY Team with assistance from Alexandra Pratt



NIGERIA: CREATIVE TO SUPPORT EDUCATION MINISTRY IN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

Creative Associates International, Inc. is launching a State Education Account (SEA) project in Kano State, Nigeria's most populous, with more than nine million mostly Muslim residents.

The state's largest city which goes by the same name, is the commercial center for northern Nigeria. As the seat of commerce in the most populous state, Creative's SEA project stands to benefit Kano's future business leaders.

The SEA is a tool for measuring the flow of funds through the education system. At present, Kano state authorities face the considerable challenge of planning, administering and managing thousands of primary schools and hundreds of secondary schools. SEA will enable the ministry of education to identify Kano's education expenditures and their allocation – along with private, public and donor resources – and provide a road-map for careful system management, planning and evaluation.

Indeed, lifting Kano's education capacities from extreme poverty will demand critical interventions toward meeting the Education for All goals.

While the SEA focuses on the Nigerian state of Kano, Creative Associates and its partner Abt Associates, conducted the first ever National Education Account (NEA) methodology in Morocco in 2005. Widely successful, Moroccan ministry officials said that the NEA, permitted them to control all educational financial expenses. They now have a complete picture of the education system's finances.

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To that end, Creative Associates, in partnership with Abt Associates, will train a multidisciplinary team from government agencies in Kano to design and implement the SEA. The team is familiar with national economic statistics and accounting practices, education policy, data collection, analysis and report writing.

SEA will also provide capacity building to the education ministry and other Nigerian agencies offering extensive technical training to carry out data collection, analysis and planning, among other skills. As with the NEA, SEA will be designed and implemented so that its methodology can be sustained and allow Nigerian education policy makers to measure the system's vital needs. Further, the successful implementation of SEA by in-country partners and their newly acquired skills will allow SEA's replication in other Nigerian states.

Nigeria SEA is an initiative of the U.S. Agency for International Development. SEA is funded under USAID's Assistance to Basic Education/Basic Education, known as ABE-BE Indefinite Quantity Contract. Nigeria SEA is the third task order awarded to Creative Associates and its partners under ABE-BE.

For more information about the Nigeria State Education Account and Morocco National Education Account, contact Creative Senior Associate Phyllis Forbes at PhyllisF@caii.com or visit www.caii.com.



SEA will meet Kano's challenges in financing its education system in the following ways:

- **Transparency:** SEA contributes to greater transparency in the education system by providing information on efficiency and equity and revealing disparities in per-student expenditure and efficiency patterns.
- **Community Participation:** SEA captures information on community financing by accounting for funds contributed by households, other private financiers, local districts and communities.
- **Projecting Future Financing Needs of an Education Sector:** SEA projects future policy needs of an education system.
- **Donor Coordination:** Understanding the usage of funds and donor contributions is very important particularly as donors increasingly seek to harmonize their programs.



ALBANIA: REGIONAL COORDINATION KEY TO EFFECTIVE ANTI-TRAFFICKING

As awareness grew among NGOs that girls and young women were being trafficked, many civil society leaders sought ways on their own to prevent it and help rehabilitate victims.

But with so many NGOs located in farflung communities and with little communication among them, the opportunities to form a network of cooperation had been limited.

Today, the cooperation landscape has improved dramatically with support from The Albanian Initiative: Coordinated Action Against Human Trafficking (CAAHT). Since 2004, CAAHT national conferences, in what are known as Regional Cluster Groups, have been formed to provide forums for sharing information and building the skills to enable coordinated anti-trafficking activities among government and civil society actors.

Different & Equal, Albania's only long-term rehabilitation and reintegration shelter, belongs to the Central Cluster Group which coordinates organizations in the region.

"D&E's relation with CAAHT started before it was a donor," said Marjana Meshi, executive director of Different & Equal, pointing to CAAHT's capacity building efforts to form regional committees. "We participated in the [CAAHT] Launch Conference to learn about other organizations," which has encouraged greater cooperation among NGOs.

Implemented by Creative Associates International, Inc. and funded by the U.S. Agency for International Development, CAAHT grew out of the U.S. Government's growing concern with the rise of human trafficking in Albania. Long before disbursing over \$2 million in grants to 19 local and two international NGOs, CAAHT had set in motion cooperative activities that would mobilize entire communities in the fight against trafficking.

Even when they had limited experience and financial resources, NGOs and the Anti-trafficking Police have been in the forefront of the anti-trafficking work in

Albania. They have also been particularly encouraged to participate in CAAHT coordination forums where they have been building strategies for cooperation with other governmental bodies such as social services, educators and employment officers.

we have first contact with victims," explained Armand Lelaj, Gjirokastra chief of anti-trafficking police.

"The RC works and it is significant that trafficking should be specifically addressed by a broader group, because



PHOTO BY: CREATIVE ASSOCIATES

UNDER CAAHT, NATIONAL COORDINATION IS HELPING PROTECT ALBANIA'S GIRLS AND YOUNG WOMEN FROM TRAFFICKERS.

"Our relationship with CAAHT helped change the perception in the community about trafficked victims, said Fatbardha Idrizi, founder and director of the Gjirokastra Community Center (GCC), a CAAHT grantee. "We convened meetings with the prefecture, education directorate and other officials."

This coordination approach [has been adopted and formalized by the Government of Albania, in large part due to the consensus built through CAAHT Regional Cluster Groups.

In June 2006, Prime Minister Sali Berisha signed an Administrative Order that created Regional Committees (RC) in the Fight Against Trafficking in Human Beings to include the directors of police, education, employment and social services, as well as mayors and NGO representatives. The RCs are led by the Prefect, the most senior official from the Central Government at the regional administration level, and provide a bridge between central and local governmental offices, in cooperation with local NGOs to combat trafficking. The anti-trafficking police "are the first to be faced with this phenomenon because

before trafficking was addressed only by the police, prosecutor and courts," said Lelaj.

According to Lelaj, the RC has provided another advantage—at special invitation from the Prefect, the prosecutor has joined the group. When stories of trafficking began to circulate, tradition and lack of information caused many Albanians to treat victims with disdain or even as criminals. Without a better understanding of trafficking, prosecutors did not aggressively pursue traffickers.

"Being a member of the RC makes the prosecutor more engaged and more motivated to pursue trafficking cases which is different from before," said Lelaj. "His presence in the RC helps him to understand better all aspects of trafficking.

"Without help, the victims will become re-trafficked," Lelaj said. "We also want to focus on prevention mechanisms. If we just pursue the prosecution of the traffickers, the victim will only be re-trafficked by another."

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ALBANIA COORDINATION IS KEY

Increased cooperation with the media is also essential. CAAHT funding has enabled the Gjirokastra Association of Professional Journalists to promote ethical principles and professional conduct required when reporting on trafficking, especially when dealing with victims.

Raimond Kola, the director of this NGO, explained why this project was so important for the media in the southern region of Albania. "The problem was that the kind of reporting being done was not appropriate. There were ethical and legal problems such as publishing a victim's identity, home location and making vulgar and sensational references to them and labeling them as prostitutes or sex slaves," said Kola. "Another bad practice that we rectified under the CAAHT project was to stop publicizing pictures and videos portraying victims."

Mobilizing civil society, local government and the media in the fight against trafficking provides perhaps the best method of prevention, but to fully succeed, the efforts must be ongoing.

"CAAHT's work has helped to fight trafficking in Gjirokastra because of the establishment of the RC and awareness raising that has occurred with their support," Lelaj said. "I thank the American people for their support. It is important that this phenomenon [human trafficking] continues to decrease. I am happy that this work is being done. It doesn't matter if I'm no longer in this position, the work should be done."

Asked whether the police's collaboration with NGOs and local authorities is helpful to trafficked victims, Lelaj shakes his head and smiles to say, "shume, shume, shume" - "a lot, a lot, a lot."

—Last fall, Alexandra Pratt traveled to Albania to report on the success of the CAAHT program. Program staff member, Etion Parruca in Tirana, assisted with translation.



CREATIVE LEARNING: SUPPORTING THE SEARCH FOR THE DISAPPEARED IN GUATEMALA

Creative Learning, Creative Associates International, Inc.'s non-profit sister organization, has received a grant from the U.S. Department of State's Bureau of Human Rights, Democracy and Labor to support the Guatemala Human Rights and Outreach (GHRO) program.

The effort will support creation of a National Commission for the Search of the Disappeared as well as produce a radio soap opera with stories that encourage victims of the civil war which ended in 1996, to come forward and testify. Awarded on February 16, 2007, the project runs through August 2008.

Creative Learning provides children and families around the world, especially in areas of conflict, with innovative learning tools and activities. Among other efforts, Creative Learning has provided educational resources and supplies, including musical instruments, to children in Afghanistan, Iraq and Panama.

For more information, or to make a donation, visit www.creativelearning.org.



PHOTO BY: NATALIE TOPA

SUDAN: SPTP TRAININGS BOOST FIRST-TIME EFFORT IN COLLABORATIVE URBAN PLANNING

The Sudan Participatory Town Planning (SPTP) project enters its second phase of expansion as it launches Collaborative Training Workshops across Southern Sudan’s 10 state capitals. In a first-time effort, tribal and community leaders, community-based organizations, civil defense officers, local business owners, and health and education officials, will spend several days in collaborative workshops in town planning. The training will help improve inter-governmental coordination for urban land management to provide an environment for suiting community needs and enhancing the human experience in post-war, urban South Sudan. The Collaborative Training Workshops began in Juba on February 19, and conclude in April. SPTP is funded by the U.S. Agency for International Development.

TECHNICAL STAFF FROM THE LAND, SURVEY AND HOUSING DEPARTMENTS CREATE MAPS FOR FUTURE DEVELOPMENT SITES IN SOUTHERN SUDAN. CREATIVE’S SPTP CHIEF OF PARTY, HANS-CHRISTIAN VEJBY, IS AT RIGHT.

IRAQ: CREATIVE ELECTIONS EXPERT ADVISES UN ON ELECTIONS

Jeffrey Fischer, Creative’s Team Leader of Elections and Political Processes, is working with UNDP and the UN’s Electoral Assistance Division to advise Iraqi electoral authorities on the organization of governorate elections and referenda anticipated later this year.

An expert on conflictive electoral processes, Fischer made his first trip to Baghdad in November 2003 as leader of the U.S. Agency for International Development-funded advisory team for the Coalition Provisional Authority (CPA), to examine electoral options toward establishing a transitional government. With the return of the UN to Iraq in April 2004, Fischer worked with the Electoral Assistance Division to establish the UN-led International Electoral Assistance Team which provided and coordinated electoral assistance from the UN and development agencies such as USAID and the United Kingdom’s Department for International Development as well as the European Commission. Fischer’s other contributions to Iraq’s electoral process includes working on all three electoral events of 2005.



PHOTO BY: CREATIVE ASSOCIATES



NEW FACES IN WASHINGTON, DC



William Swan joins the Business Development unit as a Recruitment Manager. Bill served for seven years as a recruiter for international development proposals and projects.

Before joining Creative, he served as a Senior Recruiter at Abt Associates, Inc. where he conducted full-cycle recruitment for proposals and projects in the International Health and the International Economic Divisions, implementing USAID contracts.

Bill has also served as a Recruitment Specialist for Chemonics International, where he developed new business by contributing to proposal development for agricultural policy, agribusiness, natural resources management, and economic governance projects for a variety of clients, including USAID, the Asian Development Bank and The World Bank.

Bill also has 10 years of experience in international forestry development, training, natural resources management, environmental education and served in the Peace Corps in Ecuador. He received a master's degree in natural resources management from the University of Michigan, Ann Arbor and a bachelor's degree in biology and environmental studies from Emporia State University, Emporia, Kansas. He is fluent in Spanish.

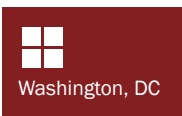


Majella van der Werf returns to Creative's Communities in Transition (CIT) division after receiving a master's degree in The Netherlands.

Majella is a familiar face at Creative: In 2002, she supported civil society projects in El Salvador and Guatemala for the CIT division. Majella has also played a role in new business development in Colombia and Guatemala, working closely on USAID public-private partnership efforts in connection with the Guatemala Youth at Risk project.

Before that, she worked in development and communications at Counterpart International. In 1998, she worked in Honduras on an emergency housing project in the aftermath of Hurricane Mitch, taught English and photography, and mentored orphaned and vulnerable youth.

Majella received a bachelor's degree in photojournalism and social documentary photography at the Sint Joost Academy for Art and Design in Breda, The Netherlands. Her master's degree is in international development studies with a focus on population, poverty and social development. In addition to English, Majella is fluent in Dutch and Spanish and proficient in French.



DEVELOPMENT COMMUNITY WELCOMED AT CREATIVE'S 9TH ANNUAL CHINESE NEW YEAR OPEN HOUSE

Tradition says that Yuan Tan known as the Chinese New Year is a time to celebrate with feasts to summon good omens for the year ahead while sweeping away the worries of yore.

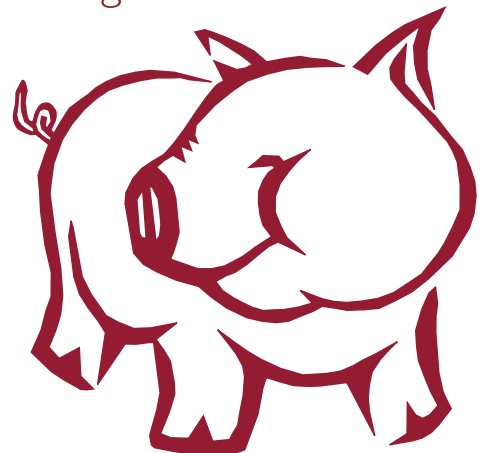
Each year, Creative's staff and guests do that and more as they gather at the firm's headquarters transformed for the evening with colorful Chinese lanterns and a sumptuous feast of Chinese specialties.

This year's Open House, the winter event for development professionals, was held on February 22nd to celebrate the Year of the Pig. The evening provided an opportunity to rekindle friendships and make new ones across a wide spectrum of development leaders.

According to legend, Buddha asked all the animals to meet him on the New Year, but only twelve animals came; to show his appreciation, Buddha named a year after each one. He also declared that the people born in that animal's year would have some of the creature's personality traits. The new year, 4705, of the lunar calendar began at midnight on Feb. 18. Those born in the Year of the Pig are said to be pure of heart, poised, a good friend, a hard worker and have an appreciation for luxury.

—Alexandra Pratt

Year of the Pig



*A YEAR OF COURAGE, PROSPERITY
AND GENEROSITY*

PHOTO OF THE SEASON



PHOTO BY: MARVIN MENDEZ, OFICIAL DE PROGRAMAS, PROGRAMA ALIANZA JOVEN DE USAID

Some of the participants of Challenge 100 – Peace for Guatemala, a unique employment program that pairs former gang members with 100 businesses, where they will learn skills to become responsible citizens with legitimate jobs. Challenge 100 is an activity under Creative’s Youth Alliance Program with USAID, which implements alternative rehabilitation programs for ex-gang members, both young men and women alike.

CREATIVE ASSOCIATES INTERNATIONAL

5301 Wisconsin Ave., NW
Suite 700
Washington, DC 20015

Produced by

Communications and Media
Development Unit

Contributors

John Blackton	Pablo Maldonado
Marc Bonnenfant	Margaret McLaughlin
Kim Clark	Joanne Murphy
Jeff Fischer	Lawrence Ndagije
Shannon Fischer	Etion Parruca
Phyllis Forbes	Renuka Pillay
Jeff Ghannam	Alexandra Pratt
Sarah Havekost	Jon Silverstone
Florence Kanykik	Lazarina Todorova
Larry Lai	Natalie Topa
Farah Malebranche	

To comment on articles or for more
information write to:
communications1@caii.com

Designed by:
CREATIVE | Graphics

Creative Associates International Inc., is a private, professional services firm headquartered in Washington, D.C. Since its inception in 1977, Creative has assisted governments, communities, NGOs, and private companies worldwide to lead and to manage change.

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