



## Creative Associates wins SWIFT II Liberia

Creative Associates has been awarded a two-year contract to support the peace process in Liberia. The firm will work with USAID's Office of Transition Initiatives (OTI) to support and strengthen the August 2003 Liberia peace agreement. The project will identify and address critical bottlenecks within the peace accord and will work to increase civil society's involvement in the peace process. The project will provide \$7 million in grants that will focus on media development, governance and transparency, and peace and justice.

## Transparency for Good Governance in Central America

Central American democracies are promoting greater transparency and political accountability by embracing civil society participation in politics as a remedy to corruption. During the November 2003 national presidential elections in Guatemala, Creative Associates, took public monitoring to new heights, through the USAID-funded Guatemala Civil Society Project. A Citizen Observatory probed government spending of public funds to support political parties in Guatemala for the first time.

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photo by Noy Villalobos/ Daniel Forman

## "A Meeting from Heaven"- Teacher Training in Iraq

After the summer's oppressive heat, September's cool weather was a welcome relief for Iraqis in Baghdad. In the Salah ad Din Hall in the Palestine Hotel, one of Baghdad's most exclusive hotels, a group of teachers, administrators and supervisors from each of Iraq's governorates gathered for the first workshop of the Revitalization of Iraqi Schools and Stabilization of Education (RISE) project's teacher training programs.

In the first session of a cascade plan that will ultimately train 64,000 teachers throughout the country, 64 future Master Trainers were exposed to new child-centered methodologies and more democratic means of cooperating with their colleagues and students. Participants found the training especially illuminating after years of confinement within a rigid and corrupt educational system.

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photo by Creative Associates

## King Abdullah II Visits Jarash

JARASH, JORDAN (January 30, 2004)

Jarash, a community made up of cluster villages with approximately 44,000 people dwelling on family farms was swept up with the sudden visit of His Majesty King Abdullah II. The King came to Jarash on an official visit to lay the corner stone of the community's jam processing facility. Surrounded by an enthusiastic crowd, His Majesty King Abdullah II of Jordan listened intently about the community development and capacity building process that had brought about a jam processing facility which will generate income and employment for villagers.

The creation of Jarash's jam processing facility is the result of intensive meetings of village committees that identified the making of jam as a means to increase their profits by extending the marketing life of their fruits from a few days to months. Implemented through Creative Associates' Rural Community Clusters Development Program (RCCDP) and funded by the Jordanian Ministry of Planning, Jarash's jam processing facility is one of many initiatives that is restoring and enhancing economic and social viability to rural clusters of communities in Jordan. For instance, the facility will encourage expansion of existing orchards and cultivation of new ones and villagers will be able to obtain better prices for their crops and still be able to produce jam at competitive prices. Villages which share common resources, similar crop production and economic livelihoods, work together to realize projects. In this way, CAII's RCCDP contributes to a sustainable rural economy that strengthens the economic and social fabric of communities.

Locals enthusiastically recounted to the King the excitement of full ownership of the process that helped them establish this facility, which will be community managed and is expected to process 500 tons of jam per year.

Since its launch in 2002, more than 140,000 citizens in more than 50 villages have benefited from the Rural Community Clusters Development Program (RCCDP). In northern Jordan's Mafraq district near the Syrian border, the program rehabilitated a 1.6 million cubic meter dam which was neglected for more than a decade. ■

## Award in Uganda Reaches \$8 Million

In January 2004, Creative Associates was awarded \$1.5 million to provide reproductive health and responsible sexuality materials to more than 12,000 government-supported schools in Uganda. These new funds will be provided through USAID's Basic Education and Policy Support (BEPS) Activity, USAID's five-year initiative to promote education improvements throughout the developing world.

This award is the latest in a series of BEPS activities to support the advancement of quality education for all in Uganda. CAII's Senior Education Policy and Institutional Support Advisor, Renuka Pillay, and her team have been working with Uganda's Ministry of Education and Sports (MOES) since June 2000 to provide new skills and techniques to practicing teachers through its decentralized Teacher Development and Management System. In October 2002, Creative Associates began working with the

MOES in designing, implementing, and monitoring pilot interventions to improve teacher effectiveness, promote reproductive health and responsible sexuality, and encourage age-appropriate early childhood education. Creative Associates provided training on participatory learning practices, funded the development, production, and distribution of 2,000 early childhood learning kits, and supported the development and limited distribution of two training manuals for Uganda's Presidential Initiative on AIDS Strategy for Communication to Youth (PIASCY). A multi-media advocacy campaign with posters, feature articles, radio spots, documentaries, drama presentations, and presentations by national notables complemented these interventions.

In November 2003, Creative Associates was awarded a \$6.5 million, 21-month contract to expand the UPE advocacy, teacher effectiveness,

and reproductive health and responsible sexuality activities initiated under Phase I (2002). In addition, CAII is supporting MOES initiatives in two new areas: primary education for disadvantaged children, particularly children in conflict areas, and guidance and counseling training for teachers. The \$1.5 million that was added in January 2004 will allow CAII to print and distribute 150,000 teacher/administrator PIASCY handbooks, provide training on the use of the document, develop a separate handbook for secondary school teachers and administrators, and introduce needed guidance and counseling techniques to pre-service teachers. ■



photo by Cynthia Prather



## Out-of-School Students Get a Second Chance

photo by American Islamic Congress

Mustafa Jabar Hamid's parents call their son's return to school a "golden opportunity." The sixteen-year-old attends the Al-Ta'aman Boys' School in the disadvantaged district of Al-Jadida in Diwaniyah and says he can't believe he has a second chance at education. "I want my country to be free and for education to be available to everyone in order to rebuild Iraq," said Mustafa.

After years of economic sanctions and decades of tyranny, Iraq's education system has collapsed. Nearly 47 percent of Iraqi students have missed years of school. To address the needs of these out of school students, USAID has contracted with CAII to implement five pilot Accelerated Learning (AL) programs through its Revitalization of Iraqi Schools and Stabilization of Education (RISE). The AL program will be carried across Iraq and is designed to accelerate children aged 6 through 14 through two years of school in just one year.

There are many reasons for the low enrollment: an inability to afford school fees, mistreatment by teachers, inadequate school facilities.

Mohammed Sabah, 14, is a student of Baghdad AL program. He has been working since the age of 12, when he was forced to quit school because his family couldn't afford to pay bribes to teachers. Mohammed said although he got very high marks on tests, he failed his classes because he couldn't pay the teachers. Since enrolling in the AL program, Mohammed works as a mechanic every morning before school and every evening after school until 6:30 pm to help support his family. Mohammed's goal for the AL program is to learn to read and write. "I am very happy in this school and I will be even happier if I can spend my whole life in this school," he says.

RISE's AL classes began on November 15th with a registration of 566 students. Since the commencement of AL classes RISE staff and the Ministry of Education have been sought out by parents and students seeking to join AL classes. The overriding demand for admission has prompted USAID to request additional classes, bringing the number of registered students to 685 as of December 20th. For parents and students alike the AL classes are

seen as a genuine program providing a second chance at education.

In fact, the demand for AL classes is so prevalent that the AL Coordinator, Martina Nicolls, has had to extend the age limit of the students. In some AL classes, students as old as 22 are enrolled. In Nasiriyah where one of the AL pilot programs is being offered, students range in age from 16 to 22 years and many continue to work in the morning before attending school. The difficulty of managing a school and work schedule has forced six students from Diwaniyah and two from Nasiriyah to leave the program for full-time work. The remaining students show their commitment to the program by studying diligently through their recess break and doing additional homework.

Heba, 18, from Nasiriyah says, "It is difficult, yes, because I have missed three years of school but I am more determined to study now. A second chance at education is more than I could have asked for and so all of my heart is consumed with the desire to learn."

The AL program has not only provided opportunities for students but it has also posed new challenges for teachers. For Khamail Hassan Karam, a science and math teacher in the AL program in Diwaniyah, a three-hour drive south of Baghdad, becoming an AL teacher was a step into the unknown. Unemployed after the fall of Saddam's regime, Khamail heard of the program from the Director General of Education and decided to attend a meeting held by Ms. Nicolls to introduce the AL Program to potential teachers. "I wanted to be so much involved," she said, "because my students want to be back at school and they are always willing to learn. They are so enthusiastic that they overwhelm me." ■



# Zambia's Collaboration on Health and Education

In 2000, Creative Associates teamed with the Zambian Ministries of Education and Health to launch an innovative School Health and Nutrition (SHN) program in Eastern Province, Zambia. The program enlists teachers to administer micronutrients and deworming drugs to students in order to stem the country's health crisis and improve student learning.

Zambia faces one of the most severe health emergencies in southern Africa. Malaria, malnutrition, and bilharzia are endemic to the country, and famine and AIDS have compounded the crisis in recent years. Life expectancy has dropped to 35 years in many parts of the country, and a decline in student performance due to illness is devastating Zambian schools.

The SHN program began to address these problems in selected schools in Eastern Province, where a baseline research sampling of 1,400 pupils (Grades 1-7) confirmed the high prevalence of bilharzia, worm infections, and Vitamin A deficiency. Concurrently, an assessment test developed by Yale University and the University of Zambia measured

the gains in cognitive ability accruing from biomedical treatments.

The SHN program's unprecedented incorporation of health care into the education system required training for teachers so that they could administer drugs and a sensitization campaign to make local communities aware of the new roles teachers were assuming. To serve these ends, the program developed training courses and manuals, a student questionnaire to determine prevalence rates of bilharzia, and a "tablet pole" to measure the correct dosage of certain drugs. To date, 400 teachers have been trained and over 40,000 pupils are now receiving SHN drugs administered by teachers.

SHN program leaders have also worked with the Ministry of Education to ensure that health programs are sustainable. Zambian coordinating committees have been established at all levels (national, provincial, district, school, and community), and standards officers have been trained in SHN activities. A drug delivery system has been set up, and the SHN data has been integrated into the broader Zambian Educational Management Information



photo by Wendy Robison

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## Transparency for Good Governance in Central America

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The public took note when it was disclosed in the country's daily papers that nearly \$2 million in public funds were spent by the government and political parties for elections purposes. Earlier in the year public monitoring by the project disclosed mispending of public funds towards school feeding programs.

Civil society groups have launched advocacy efforts in support of greater public access to information so that the media and civic advocacy organizations can perform their roles in the fight against corruption. The Civil Society Project in Guatemala has worked to strengthen the General Controller's Office and the Attorney General's Office for Anti-Corruption. The project's Coalition for Transparency has developed a national agenda which has been adopted by Guatemala's new Administration. The Commissioner for Transparency has requested USAID's guidance in ensuring the strategy is followed. A manual that explains to citizens their right to access information was published by the project and has been disseminated widely. "We see transparency as the corner-

stone of all of our civil society efforts", explains the director of the Civil Society Project, Harold Sibaja.

In El Salvador, Creative Associates' Citizen Participation and Governance Project supported a municipal transparency project that established citizen watchdog groups to monitor public spending in nine municipalities. Last year, the project supported a local workshop on corruption and open access to information for legislators, media representatives and civil society leaders. The project is currently supporting organizations that promote and train other civil society organizations in budget transparency and other citizen oversight mechanisms, as well as a campaign to raise awareness about the importance of access to information. Creative Associates supports extensive institutional strengthening. "Just as civil society organizations seek to hold government more accountable, they also have to operate in a more transparent and accountable manner", notes David Holiday, director of the project in El Salvador.

Grantees in civil society are altering the civic landscape by raising awareness and promoting legislative reforms, but the project also works with public sector partners to open up governmental processes to greater citizen participation. As a result of the Citizen Participation and Governance Project, the oversight of public officials in El Salvador could be institutionalized for the first time

if a Code of Ethics bill for public servants is passed by legislators this year. As a part of efforts to support citizen involvement in the Legislative Assembly, the Citizen Participation and Governance Project is establishing through its subcontractor, the University of Texas, a permanent constituent services office at the Assembly and has launched a children's website explaining the workings of the legislative branch in El Salvador. The establishment of a citizens hotline, bringing citizens closer to government, is also slated for this year.

Creative Associates has launched anti-corruption activities elsewhere in Latin America. In Peru, it recently completed a two-year project known as Apoyo Creativo para la Transición (ACT). It disbursed more than 200 grants totaling \$6.6 million to Peruvian NGOs working for democratic reforms. The strategy included developing anti-corruption materials, training journalists in oversight responsibilities, holding workshops to strengthen citizen networks, providing legal assistance to prison inmates, and helping radio stations inform the public on corruption and how to combat it. ■



photo by CREA/El Salvador

For more information on Activities in Guatemala and El Salvador see: [www.caii.net](http://www.caii.net)

For more information on the Citizen Observatory project: <http://info.worldbank.org/etools/docs/library/33517/GuatemalaAccesoInfo.pdf>

## First Year Successes in Afghanistan

The Afghanistan Primary Education Project (APEP), launched in January 2003, has been authorized to accelerate the implementation of its multiple programs in anticipation of additional USAID funding. The proposed APEP expansion complements its successes in the first phase of the program, which improved the quality of and access to, primary education for over-age learners and strengthened teacher training.

APEP's accelerated learning program has enrolled 15,000 over-age learners in the first cycle of the project. The program's ultimate goal is to provide accelerated learning classes to over 100,000 over-age, out of school children helping them to achieve grade level equivalencies and enter the formal school system. In this way, accelerated learning helps un-enrolled youth, especially girls, make up for the years of education they missed due to civil war and state-imposed restrictions by completing two academic grade levels or more each year. The program which started in the Faryab, Nangarhar and Baghlan provinces has now extended to 12



AFGHANISTAN

photo by Katy Anis

other provinces. The success of the accelerated learning classes is best exemplified in the case of Baghlan province. For the 5,000 slots open to students in Baghlan, more than 12,000 students requested enrollment.

Another key success of APEP is the Distance Learning Program, a radio-based teacher training curriculum that reaches more teachers in remote jurisdictions. The innovative radio program, It is Great to Learn!, has broken through conventional barriers by using a format of features and dramas, that entertain even as they educate. Nationally broadcast through Radio Free Afghanistan, as well as other national and provincial radio stations, the educational radio programming trains isolated teachers in child-centered methods of teaching literacy, numeracy, and life skills.

In anticipation of APEP's expansion plans, the Ministry of Education has asked USAID and APEP to print additional textbooks due to the persistent problem of the lack of textbooks in schools. The shortage of textbooks is a hindrance on many levels including its implications

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## "A Meeting from Heaven" - Teachers Training in Iraq

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"They described the training as a meeting from heaven," says Milook Aqqi, a master trainer with the Iraqi Foundation (IF) who is working with RISE project staff to train teachers and administrators throughout the country.

Dr. Hind Rassam Culhane, Senior Education Supervisor at Creative, explains that some of the new methodologies presented at the RISE teacher training workshops were simply unheard of in Iraq. For instance, participants learn teamwork by breaking into groups and working on joint tasks, a method that will be implemented by teachers when they return to their classrooms. While students are in groups, the teacher can monitor their progress. "The idea of a teacher walking around a room and interacting with students is revolutionary," observes Culhane. "Here a teacher just sits."

The 64 teachers and administrators who came to the Palestine Hotel conference hall to begin the six day Master Trainer's course were unsure what the next few days would bring and brought with them a certain level of distrust. They were to be the first to be trained in the RISE teacher training program and would go on to train others in subsequent five day training workshops.

Not all went smoothly at first. RISE and IF's master trainers encountered resistance when they placed teachers and administrators in the same training sessions. "The administrators asked us why

we were putting them with teachers because they should be more privileged and receive different training," explained Culhane. "There was a lot of pouting at first, but what we were doing was breaking down the rank mentality and building team concepts. We found that by the end of these workshops, administrators and teachers sit and share a cup of tea."

Even the most basic classroom techniques and tools must be modeled and emphasized by trainers. "Most teachers did not use the blackboard even to summarize points from a lesson; they have never done this," said Culhane. "We found that a lot of teachers had not done lesson plans in 10 to 12 years."

The teacher training program also stresses accountability and promotes the idea that education is about more than just math or spelling. "We focus on the rights and responsibilities of the whole team—the students, teachers, principals," said Culhane. The values component is seen as particularly important in Iraq, where the teaching profession has suffered from low morale and widespread corruption.

Perhaps the most important aspect of the RISE training -- and initially the most difficult to put into practice -- is its message of democracy and democratic rule. "We encourage them to discuss, we divide them in groups so they can express them-

selves, speak out. We implement a kind of democracy," said Nadia Jadir, an Iraqi who fled Iraq for Canada in 1995 and who is now coordinator and master trainer for the Iraqi Foundation. The course encourages participants to ask questions and give opinions on the school system and their aspirations for its future. "The first day of the training, the participants are puzzled, they ask who is RISE, what do we want from them. They are not used to trusting each other and are afraid of the consequences of the freedom to speak that they are granted. The second day they realize there is something new. We tell them you can disagree. On the third day everyone wants to speak out."

At the end of the course, each group was asked to choose a symbol for what they had learned. Bassim Raheem's group chose a candle. "It burns and burns and burns to light the way for their pupils," said Raheem, a secondary school English teacher from Al-Anbar governorate. "Please tell your government that we need more training like this in order to improve ourselves and be better teachers."

In January and February, RISE undertook the mother of all teacher trainings by training 33,000 teachers across Iraq. Ultimately, by the end of the summer holidays, 64,000 teachers will have been trained. ■



# The Cocoa Industry and Ghana's Child Laborers

Child laborers in Ghana's lucrative cocoa industry commonly suffer from physical injuries and a lack of education, according to a report issued by Creative consultant L. Diane Mull.

While Ghana was one of the first African nations to embrace child labor protection laws, these laws are often ignored by communities that desperately need the income and labor provided by children. Children constitute 12.6 percent of Ghana's overall labor force, but this figure rises to nearly 80 percent in some rural areas. Inconsistencies in policy make Ghana's official minimum age of employment difficult to enforce. The 1967 decree that prohibits employment before the age of 15, for example, includes a clause allowing younger children to perform light work.

While children derive some lessons in responsibility from farm work, Mull's analysis found that child laborers in cocoa production, under-trained and lacking protective gear, regularly suffer from machete cuts, falls from trees, and exposure to pesticide. Their work prevents them from attending school.

Mull's study, entitled "Analysis of Job Tasks and Activities by Children in Cocoa Production," focuses on the district of Sefwi-Wiawso in Western Ghana. Its findings will assist the Youth Education and Skills (YES) Project, managed by Creative Associates in partnership with CARE, as it creates a series of public service announcements about the dangers of cocoa production for children. The project will also develop a functional literacy curriculum aimed at child laborers.

"My hope is that this paper will give service providers insights into a methodology for defining hazardous work so that decisions about work tasks that children are involved in can be made with their physical, mental, and emotional development in mind," said Mull.

West African countries produce nearly 70% of the world's cocoa. According to the BBC's World Business Report there are approximately 254,000 children working in hazardous conditions in the West African cocoa sector. In Ghana, cocoa revenues account for more than 33% of the country's total export earnings. An agrarian economy dominated by small family farms, Ghana depends on children to supply farm labor. At least 96 percent of rural working children are involved in farming.

The goal of the YES project is to reduce the worst forms of child labor by delivering life skills and functional literacy in an English language education program. The curriculum will be accompanied by a radio campaign that will broadcast messages on worker safety and improved agricultural production techniques. The project will also sponsor a community-led social marketing and mobilization campaign to help communities reduce risks and increase access to education for child workers. Community groups will be charged with increasing local school enrollment for children at risk and helping the families of farmers, migrants, and sharecroppers develop income sources that do not rely on the work of their children. ■

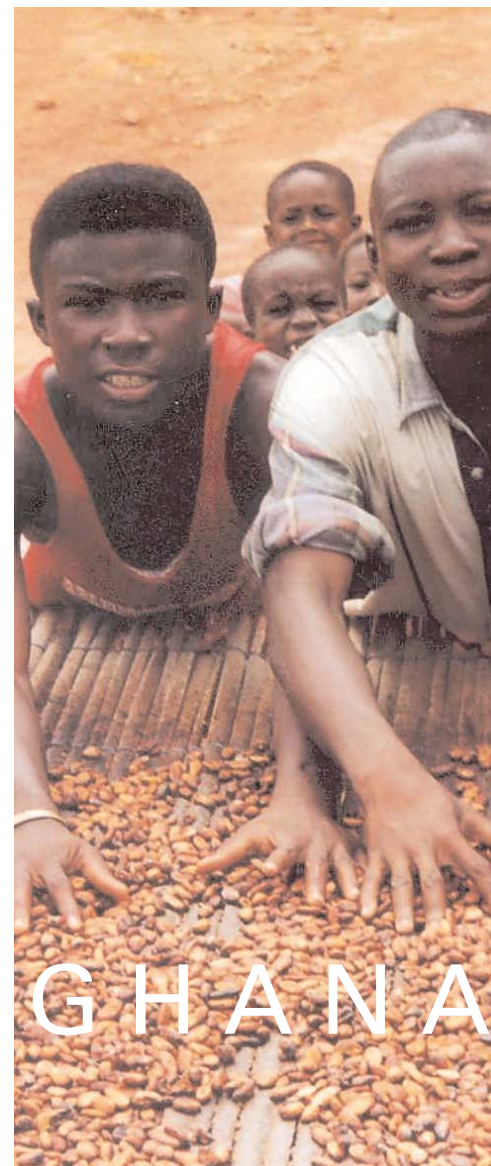


photo by Kevin Elkins

## Zambia's Collaboration on Health and Education

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Management Information System. Moreover, a small grants mechanism, implemented through a sub-contract with CARE International, allows the SHN program to provide funds for communities and schools to implement projects related to School Health and Nutrition and HIV/AIDS. The results achieved from the baseline research and follow-up surveys demonstrate that worm loads and bilharzia rates have dropped in the three years since the program began. Teachers have successfully administered SHN drugs, and re-infection rates remain low. Health education materials are now in

classrooms, and schools and clinics coordinate more frequently. The fact that parents, teachers, and government officials are demanding expansion of the SHN program testifies to its success. Data from the Zambian cognitive assessment tests support this enthusiasm. They indicate a marked improvement in pupils' learning ability after deworming has taken place. ■



photo by Wendy Robison

## First Year Successes in Afghanistan

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for the radio-based teacher training program which depends on accompanying textbooks to be fully effective. Consequently, the Ministry is exploring ways to increase the available supply of textbooks.

An initial estimate of 15.6 million new textbooks is the target number for increasing the supply of textbooks throughout Afghanistan. While the number of desired textbooks seems daunting, it is noteworthy that last year the APEP program produced 10.2 million Dari and Pashto textbooks in all subjects except religion.

Larry Goldman has been named Deputy COP of the Afghan project and Katy Anis, Program Officer. Both Larry and Katy have relocated to Afghanistan for a two year period. Eileen St.

George has returned from Kabul where she worked on finalizing the APEP expansion. Carolyn Burnes was in Kabul providing finance and accounting training. Gail von Hahmann continues to serve as Senior Education Specialist and Abdul Rahman is transitioning to Operations Manager. Other new staff include: Francoise Beukes as the Education Support Services (ESS) Manager and Sara Amiryar as the new ESS Program Planning and Strategic Management Advisor. Steve Landrigan has been newly named as Communications Coordinator and Leonard Chitekwe-Mwale has arrived in Kabul to serve as Finance Manager. Wendy Robison, Mary Faith Mount-Cors and Daniel Forman have newly joined the APEP team in the home office. ■

# Interfaith Symposium, "The Principles of the Abrahamic Faiths: Traditions that Advance Education"

Creative co-sponsored with the Caux Round Table the symposium, "The Principles of the Abrahamic Faiths: Traditions that Advance Education". The event was held at the Ronald Reagan Building on February 12th. Charito Kruvant led the symposium, challenging speakers and audience to discuss both the common values of the Abrahamic faiths and their role in education.

The symposium featured Dr. Abdul Said, Director of the Global Peace Center, American University, as the keynote speaker. Dr. Said made a call for the development of "global citizenship," as a means to overcome the gaps of wealth and knowledge around the world. The Abrahamic faiths have their role in this process as promoters of knowledge, science and spirituality. Dr. Said elaborated on the dangers of the advancement of technology without a spiritual and philosophical outlook. Global citizenship requires "embracing the good of all humanity". In his conclusion, Dr. Said pointed to the importance of "moral imagination" and the importance of each individual as a "chosen human being."

Other speakers included Katherine Marshall from the World Bank and John Ryan from UNESCO. Ms. Marshall spoke candidly about the opportuni-

ties and collective responsibility in achieving the "millennium goals." The common phrase, "the poor will always be with us," might have been applicable in the past but not today. Ms. Marshall elaborated on the good and bad sides of globalization and the importance in establishing dialogue among the religions. Understanding dialogue as a means towards concrete action, Ms. Marshall called for an analysis and review of how religious traditions influence education.

Dr. John Ryan described his experiences in Morocco with the Moroccan Education for Girls (MEG) project. Schools in Morocco were perceived as instruments of the State where there was no space for discussion and participation by the parents. "Education cannot advance without the values shared by the community". Dr. Ryan expressed his concerns about the processes of modernization in education and said that modernization is not necessarily the answer, it's the combination of modernization with tradition that will advance education, claiming that "modernization is losing its magic."

Following Ms Marshall's and Dr. Ryan's speeches a panel composed of Most Reverend Thomas Wenski, Dr. Haytham Al Khayat (through teleconference), Mr. Hamd Al Khayat, Dr. David Elcott and



photo by Carola Mandelbaum

Dr. Amr Abdalla discussed the values that can be extracted from the Abrahamic religions to enrich and advance education around the world. All of the panelists agreed that religion has historically promoted literacy and learning. In an attempt to answer the question which the panelist posed: "Education for what"? Dr. Said suggested that the answer is in the creation of a "global citizenship"

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## ▣ In Support of Small Businesses

In her capacities as Chair of the Small Business Administration Washington Metropolitan District Office (SBA-WMDO) Advisory Council and Chair of the Greater Washington Board of Trade's International Gateway Program, Charito joined the International Trade Center, SBA-WMDO and the USAID's Office of Procurement in a most successful outreach to small business. The event, held on January 21st had an attendance of over 200 small businesses, many of them SBA 8(a) firms. The purpose of this gathering was to acquaint the Greater Washington Metropolitan's small business community with opportunities and requirement in partnering with USAID and to support USAID in identifying small business partners.

The event, held at the Ronald Reagan Building, featured presentations by Tim Beans, the Chief

Acquisition Officer for USAID and Joseph Laddo, the Director of the SBA-WMDO office. For her part, Charito shared Creative's experience as a graduate of the SBA 8(a) program and challenged the participants to begin networking and partnering at the conclusion of the presentations by engaging with one another and with the USAID and SBA personnel at the meeting. Many contacts were made and the follow-up promises surely helped USAID meet its small business goals.

## ▣ Creative in the News

On November 5, 2003, The Washington Post published an article on the obstacles in distributing school supplies in Iraq. The article, which quotes Robert Gordon, describes Creative's long and challenging journey in delivering school bags stocked with notebooks, rulers, pens, erasers, calculators, geometry sets, pencils, and sharpeners to 1.5 million Iraqi schoolchildren. The delivery of these school kits is one of the "more visible projects" in the process of rebuilding Iraq, and "a tangible sign of how the new government is making people's lives better." Despite the logistical difficulties, the school kits, along with 58,500 chalkboards arrived to schools and towns around the country. If you'd like to read the article in its entirety, please visit [washingtonpost.com](http://washingtonpost.com) (Nov 5, 2003, pg. A.19).

More recently, on February 22nd, The New York Times published an article on the lack of resources that exist for American companies faced with the task of rebuilding Iraq. The article discussed Creative's programs in education reform and touched upon the problem of school drop outs and noted Creative's accelerated pilot program which is helping to return Iraqi children to school. The article also quoted Robert Gordon making a comparison of the present difficulties facing Iraq as being, "not unlike the challenges we have in the inner city" in the United States. To read the article in its entirety, please visit [nytimes.com](http://nytimes.com) (Feb 22, 2004, pg. 10).

## ▣ Be Honest - Communications Workshop

The Steve Gaffney Communications workshop will be held on Feb. 26 and 27. The sessions will run from 9:00 am to 5:00 pm and the training will be held in the West Wing Conference Room. Please contact Wendy Bradford or Jessica Kruvant-Wilson if you are interested in attending.

## ▣ Open House

Creative's Open House was held on February 18th in celebration of the Chinese Year of the Monkey. This year's New Year celebration was well attended, and by all accounts considered a successful and joyful celebration.



photo by Jessica Kruvant-Wilson



## Letter from the Field: IRAQ



*Desks, desks, and more desks.*

*Over the course of a few months in Iraq, I've seen, sat on, inspected, stood on, measured, photographed, taken off trucks, and loaded back on trucks more school desks than you could ever imagine.*

*Walking through an empty Iraqi school and inspecting classrooms, you see rows of standard two-seater desks lined up like a worn-out army. Yet you still rarely find a classroom with a sufficient number of desks for the students. Even more often the desks are in terrible condition. The neglect endured by Iraqi schools is incredible. Secondary schools in Iraq were short almost 400,000 desks at the end of the last school year -- that's almost a million kids without a place to sit!*

*Some schools don't have enough desks. Some have lots of broken desks. Some schools have desk graveyards: open lots with scores of tortured desks tumbling and falling atop one another. Every once and a while, you can find a school with the single-seat desk - very rare, and prized by teachers and students alike.*

*Desks and school supplies have taken on a magical quality for me since working for the RISE project. Students and teachers are appreciative and overjoyed when trucks show up at their doors with new desks, chalkboards, and school bags. I remember how exciting it was for me to go school supply shopping with my parents and get new binders and notebooks. If the Trapper Keeper isn't one of the icons of my generation, I don't know what is. For many Iraqi students, it's been years since they've had a good set of brand new pencils.*

*The RISE procurement team in Baghdad became obsessed with the quality of these materials. Everything needed to be as close to perfect as possible for the schoolchildren. We felt that anything less than perfect would be a letdown for the students and would be tantamount to theft. These kids, after all, had been through the war, and they deserved the best supplies we could offer.*

*An education project like RISE is an investment and an act of faith. The supplies and furniture Americans are providing to Iraq are an investment of trust, hope, and promise. We're showing students in Iraq that with the right tools and the right environment, we're confident that they will succeed. Seeing the children receive the supplies, I can tell that they recognize this trust. They love the attention and they love seeing us commit our time to them. With all the terrifying things happening in Baghdad these days, you can never have too many people showing they care. I'm glad I could send this message two seats at a time.*

Daniel Loren Forman  
[DanielF@cail.com](mailto:DanielF@cail.com)

## Haiti's Community Airwaves

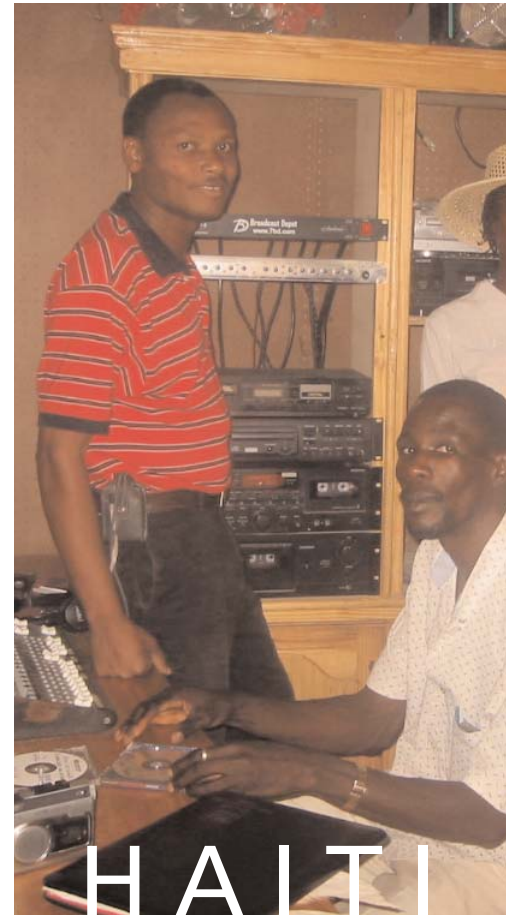
**A**urelien Joachin is a community radio broadcaster in Anse d'Hainault, a small town in western Haiti. Last year his station, Radio Rebelle, broadcast a 12-part locally produced civic education radio series addressing the Constitution, citizens' rights and justice issues. The story recounts the tale of a young woman, Mesia, who is raped and in the process of seeking justice comes to realize her civic responsibilities, including denouncing corruption within her town's police force. Mr. Joachin began to reflect on the situation in his own town and used Radio Rebelle's airwaves to report on corruption in the local police. The local chief of police brought charges against Mr. Joachin. As a result of the broadcast's educational power, his community stood behind him and plans to arrest him were dropped.

Mr. Joachin's story is not unique. Radio is a powerful means of communicating with Haitian communities. Creative's Haiti Media Assistance and Civic Education Program, also known in Creole as RAMAK, provides a range of support. In addition to producing and disseminating the soap opera series nationwide, Creative Associates is providing equipment and training to 35 community radio stations to increase their broadcast range. It is supporting stations in improving their programming on civic education, and training them to improve their fundraising and management skills.

RAMAK recently brought together its partner community radio station broadcasters for a three-day National Community Radio Conference. Leading local communications and community development experts mediated the sessions, which welcomed USAID deputy director Pam Callen and the program's Cognizant Technical Officer at USAID, Mohamed Zahar. Participants sketched out a mission for community radio in Haiti and worked on developing regional networks to help bolster stations locally. Participants shared experiences and attended refresher courses on management and fundraising.

The impact of the civic education soap opera series-which through story-telling deals with a range of issues including corruption, justice, and solidarity-was undeniable at the conference. Story after story indicated the transformative effect the series is having in communities, educating citizens while bringing them closer together around their common rights.

Creative Associates has launched the Haiti Media Assistance and Civic Education Program in September 2001. Current political turmoil in Haiti is a challenge to the project, which is working with radio stations so that these may have a calming influence in communities. ■



HAITI  
photo by Bronwen Morrison

## Somaliland Education Program Design Takes Shape



SOMALILAND  
photo by MaryFaith Mount-Cors

**I**n January 2004, Creative Associates carried out an eight-day design mission in Hargeisa, Somaliland (the northwest zone of Somalia) where MaryFaith Mount-Cors and Kim Mahling Clark held more than twenty-five meetings with partners active in education in Somaliland, the Somaliland Teacher Education College (STEC) director, the Ministry of Education, the Ministry of Planning and Coordination, and the Ministry of Information. Out of these consultations, Creative Associates prepared a design paper, which will serve as an input in donor coordination meetings. A combined donor proposal, from USAID, the European Community, UNESCO, UNICEF and others will go forward to the government of Somaliland for assistance to the STEC and the development of teachers in Somaliland. CARE is working directly with Creative Associates on this program under the Basic Education Policy Support (BEPS) contract.

Following a May 2003 assessment of the education sector carried out by Creative Associates and CARE, USAID determined that providing better training and attracting more female teachers, with

communities supporting these teachers in their pursuit of teacher education, were key objectives for the program. To begin the program design process and determine the approach needed to carry out this scope of work, in November 2003, BEPS undertook a five-day information-gathering trip to Nairobi to hold meetings with 12 partners and participate in three donor coordination meetings to discuss the needs of the STEC. Donor coordination is a central interest of USAID and others working in Somaliland and with the STEC. The USAID strategic niche in supporting teacher development and the STEC is intended to contribute positively to the ongoing substantial efforts of other donors and partners in Somaliland. Somaliland is the northwest zone of Somalia. Its status as an independent country has not been recognized by the international community. ■



# An Innovative Project to Protect Child Witnesses in the Court Room

# SOUTH AFRICA

The Unit for Child Witness Research and Training at Cape Town's Vista University, is supported by Creative Associates' South Africa Grants Management and Technical Assistance (GMTA) project. Since 1997, the project has extended grants to South African civil society organizations which promote access to justice, rights education and protection, conflict resolution, and public policy participation.

Lawyer and researcher, Dr. Karen Muller, has devoted her career to the thousands of child witnesses who pass through South Africa's courts. In a country where 33 courts handle sexual offenses alone and crime is endemic, the justice system depends on the testimonies of young witnesses and victims of crime. Child witnesses, many of whom have endured abuse and emotional trauma, lack an understanding of the court process. They provide ineffective testimony which leads to fewer convictions in courts.

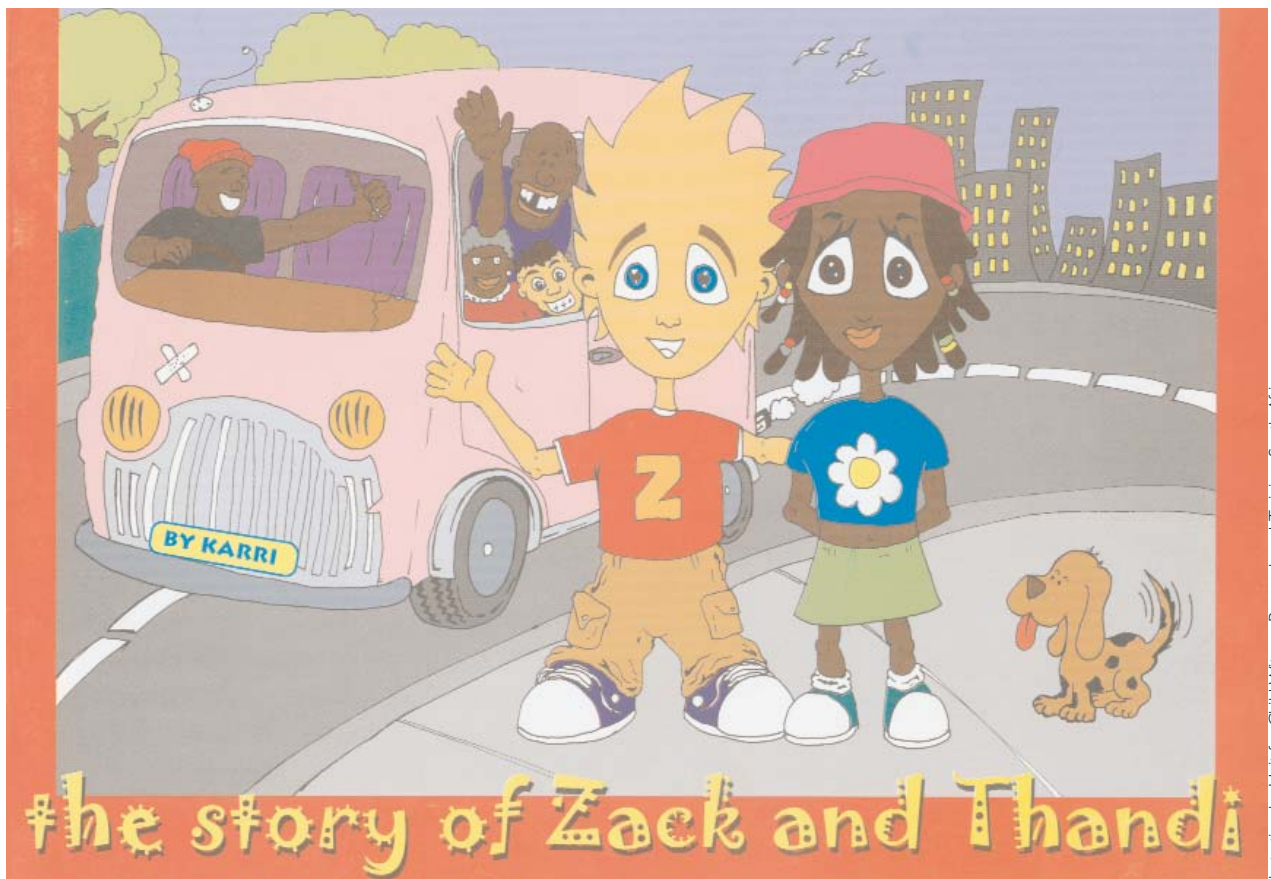
Dr. Muller shows me a plain white plastic box in the office she and a colleague share at the Unit

for Child Witness Research and Training (Child Witness Research) at Cape Town's Vista University. From the box emerge a puzzle, a court procedure timeline, role playing games and 'Zack and Thandi', characters from a story of two child witnesses that allows children to feel they are not alone in witnessing crime. With the support of USAID, the Unit for Child Witness Research and Training has developed and piloted South Africa's first child witness preparation program.

Extensive research, 500 interviews with young witnesses and consultative workshops with judges, prosecutors, defense lawyers and police, have helped the Child Witness Research gain an understanding of the fears and misperceptions that hamper children in the court room. Research has revealed common misunderstandings related to court terminology; many children, for example, confuse prosecutor with executor. Ninety percent of young witnesses wet themselves on the stand. Most children suffer emotional stress during long waiting periods before trials.

By law, child testimony in South Africa must take place in a separate room and be broadcast on a closed-circuit TV system. Only the most distraught have access to an intermediary--a trained social worker who simplifies complex questions. Most children endure the intimidating trial process alone.

The Child Witness Research developed a child witness preparation program for children between the ages of six and twelve. Hour-long interactive sessions address a different topic every week. Games, visual tests and role playing exercises touch on everything from key role players in the court room to post-testimony procedure. The unit piloted the program during two trials, testing its effectiveness and cultural sensitivity. Its potential to empower and educate witnesses was gauged in collaboration with Child Line Family Centre, a USAID-supported center for interventions with child abuse victims and child witnesses. The trial testing the program's effectiveness was held with 11 children awaiting testimony in court. Many had survived abuse and all came from impoverished backgrounds. ■



'Zack and Thandi' is a story of two child witnesses that allows children to feel they are not alone in witnessing crime.

Illustration by Unit for Child Witness Research and Training, South Africa

# NOTEBOOK

## Basic Education and Policy Support (BEPS)

In February, The Basic Education and Policy Support (BEPS) Activity completed its fourth year of support to USAID in its mission to improve and expand basic education, particularly for girls and other underserved populations. Since its inception, Creative Associates and its partners (CARE, GroundWork, and George Washington University) have provided assessments, trainings, pilot interventions, and other technical assistance to 25 countries in areas related to basic education, policy reform, children in crisis, and the alleviation of abusive child labor through education. BEPS also has provided administrative and logistical support for five USAID workshops designed to disseminate research and lessons learned to Mission staff. Task order contracts and core activities have exceeded \$43 million.

As it starts its fifth year, BEPS is actively involved in numerous activities, a few of which are described below:

**The CHANGES Program in Zambia:** BEPS is nearing completion of its first three-year phase of an initiative that involves two major components -- school health and nutrition, to improve student performance by training teachers to administer deworming and micronutrient supplements and community sensitization and mobilization to improve access to primary education for girls and other vulnerable children and

to mitigate the effects of the HIV/AIDS epidemic. Two crosscutting activities - a Small Grants Mechanism, and HIV/AIDS activities, also are being implemented. A project expansion is pending.

**LAC: Centers for Excellence in Teacher Training (CETTs):** CAII is continuing its efforts to support USAID supported CETTs in the Latin America and Caribbean, Central America, and Andean regions. Current activities include field work focusing on pilot first grade intervention programs in the Central American Region and assistance to the Caribbean CETT in designing a Wireless Intranet System to provide teacher training to clusters of institutions.

**Morocco Education of Girls:** CAII began collecting data on the impact of the Morocco Education for Girls (MEG) Project, a recently completed, six-year initiative funded by USAID. Task order activities also include the design and pretesting of two training modules for school directors.

**Uganda Technical Assistance:** BEPS began work on a \$8 million expansion contract, which should extend education support activities through the projected end of BEPS in 2005. Activities relate to five key areas: support to disadvantaged children, particularly children in conflict areas; UPE advocacy; teacher effectiveness;

responsible sexuality and health education; and guidance and counseling (see separate article).

**Bangladesh:** BEPS began research on the third of a series of educational sector studies, Madrassah Schools in Bangladesh. Field work on the first two studies, Early Childhood Learning, and Students' and Teachers' Use of Time in Primary Schools, has been conducted and reports are being finalized.

**Global:** As a result of collaborative efforts between CAII and its subcontractor, CARE/USA, BEPS is continuing to provide technical assistance in planning, monitoring, and evaluating rehabilitative and reconstructive education activities for children and youth in crisis countries. The recently completed urban youth report, "Urbanization, War, and Africa's Youth at Risk," is being distributed, and work has begun on a youth-at-risk toolkit, which will include a series of short papers on youth-at-risk-related issues for USAID missions in Africa.



photo by Marc Sommers

## Albania: Anti-Trafficking



photo by Kate Carpenter

The Albanian Umbrella Anti-Trafficking Initiative (AUATI) contract, awarded to Creative Associates International by USAID in September 2003, welcomed its Chief of Party (COP), Sarah Stephens, to Albania in January 2004. Since her arrival, staff members from CAII's home office have been sent to Albania to help Ms. Stephens start up the new project office, hire staff and elaborate on program activities with USAID/Albania.

Given that this is the largest anti-trafficking contract awarded in a single country by USAID to date, USAID/Albania considers the AUATI contract to be groundbreaking as well as highly visible both within and outside of Albania. USAID is looking at the Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) work done on this Initiative to potentially become models for other anti-trafficking programs funded by USAID. World Learning, CAII's subcontractor on this initiative, is providing the Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) expertise.

The AUATI project plans to support Albania's anti-trafficking efforts by providing a space for consensus building and partnerships across the Government of Albania, civil society and the international community; distributing grants to local and international NGOs in several cycles throughout the 3 year Initiative to improve the scope and quality of prevention and reintegration activities; and by developing and improving mechanisms through which Albania's anti-trafficking community can collect, synthesize, analyze and use trafficking data.



# NEW FACES - NEW FACES - NEW FACES



**Verity Stiff** joined Creative Associates in February 2004, as a Field Personnel Manager. Ms. Stiff will handle personnel negotiations and contracts and all HR related issues concerning field based personnel, both expatriates and third country nationals. Most recently, Ms. Stiff worked with the United Nations Development Program's (UNDP) Kosovo Police Service project providing human resources know-how in the area of recruitment strategy development. Prior to her work with UNDP, Ms. Stiff spent most of her career with the World Wildlife Fund and other international organizations in Syria, Germany, Switzerland and the U.S. Ms. Stiff has also worked with the African Development Bank principally in the Middle East and Africa concentrating on human resources consulting and management. Ms. Stiff holds a Masters Degree in Public Management.



**Sarah Jane Stephens** joined Creative Associates in December 2003, as the Chief of Party for Albania in the Education, Mobilization and Communications Division. Ms. Stephens has worked in the human rights field for over 16 years and brings to CAI expertise in Combating Human Trafficking, Conference Planning, Program Management and donor reporting. During the past two years Ms. Stephens has been a point person for counter-trafficking programs development, serving on an expert coordination team of the Stability Pact Task Force on Trafficking in Human

Rights. Ms. Stephens received her Master of Divinity degree from San Francisco Theological Seminary and has completed coursework in International Policy Studies at the University of Bristol. She holds a Bachelor of Arts degree in Political Studies from Whitworth College in Spokane, Washington. Ms. Stephens has worked in Geneva, Switzerland since 1995 and Pristina, Kosovo, from 2000-20001.



**Rebecca Cusic** joined Creative Associates in November 2003, as the BEPS Latin American and Caribbean Activity Coordinator in the Education, Mobilization and Communications Division. For the past seven years, Ms. Cusic has worked with Save the Children in the USA, serving as an Education Specialist for the past three years. Ms. Cusic's managed a portfolio of 10 countries to ensure quality education programming. Her areas of expertise include proposal development, program implementation/ technical support to primary, youth, and adult education. Ms. Cusic initiated worldwide research efforts for Youth Programs and Alliance Education activities and presented these findings to Congress and the Basic Education Coalition. Ms. Cusic received her Master of Arts in Teaching from Towson State University (Peace Corp Fellow), and Bachelor of Arts in Spanish from Northern Illinois University. Ms. Cusic speaks Spanish, Portuguese, French and Haitian Creole.

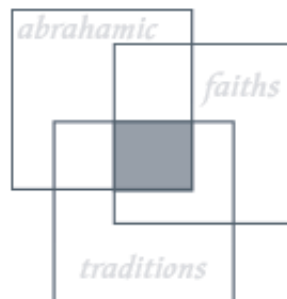


**D. Jerry Rubino** joined Creative Associates in November 2003, as the Senior Advisor for Security and Emergency Preparedness in the Office of Operations. For the past 23 years, Mr. Rubino has served as the Director of the Security and Emergency Planning Staff, Justice Management Division, (JMD) for the Department of Justice (DOJ). Mr. Rubino was responsible for crisis management support for the DOJ's leadership, overseeing contingency planning for civil disorders and disturbances, and ensuring continuity of the DOJ's operations in the event of national security emergencies. Managing a staff of 75 federal employees with an annual budget of \$15 million, Mr. Rubino oversaw security operations for DOJ worldwide, supervised the design and construction of the Justice Command Center in Washington DC, and designed and supervised the construction of alternate crisis management and emergency operations center for the DOJ and the FBI at a remote location. Earlier in his career, Mr. Rubino also served as an Investigator, Security Specialist, and Systems Administrator for the United States Central Intelligence Agency. Mr. Rubino holds a Master's degree in Public Administration and a Bachelor's degree in Social Sciences from George Washington University.

## Interfaith Symposium, "The Principles of the Abrahamic Faiths: Traditions that Advance Education." (contd. from pg. 6)

In his closing remarks, Dr. Kenneth Goodpaster, from the Caux Round Table, quoted the phrase, "I rejoice because you are my brother and I laugh because you can do nothing about it" to call for "siblinghood" between religions that worship the same God and Abrahamic traditions. In explaining the way this "siblinghood" is applied to education, Dr Goodpaster referenced the phrase by Winston Churchill: " First we shape our institutions; then they will shape us."

The symposium was attended by a distinguished audience composed of educators from developing countries and the Washington, DC metropolitan area, individuals from the Department of State, the Agency for International Development and the World Bank, Legislative and Senatorial aides, colleagues from other development firms, Creative staff and others.



On Friday February 13th, following the symposium, a special "Creative staff only" session took place in the headquarters office. The objective of the Friday session was to internalize information from the previous day and determine how such knowledge can improve our effectiveness in implementing program activities in multi-cultural settings.

Dr. Goodpaster called for all Abrahamic traditions to bring together their commonalities and leave behind the violence in their name. "Religion is part of the solution" was the general consensus of the participants and the need of community involvement is key for a successful approach to our projects. ■

# CREATIVE TIMES

## Photo of the Month



photo by Dr. Seth Spaulding

"A Government Primary School in rural Bangladesh. The children in the photo are a mixture of 1st to 5th graders. This photo was taken in October-November 2003 during the research on a USAID/Bangladesh requested study for the Basic Education and Policy Support (BEPS) activity. The title of the study was *"Time to Learn": Teachers' and Students' Use of Time in Government Primary Schools in Bangladesh*".

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