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NEW USAID/SENEGAL BASIC EDUCATION PROGRAM FOCUSES ON VULNERABLE CHILDREN, GOOD GOVERNANCE AND PUBLIC-PRIVATE PARTNERSHIPS

Dakar, Senegal, February 18, 2008 – A focus on vulnerable and street children, a new curriculum to promote good governance, and an emphasis on developing stronger relationships with the private sector, including an initiative to promote wireless Internet access, are part of a new five-year Basic Education program launched this week on behalf of USAID/Senegal.

The US \$40 million program will be implemented in 10 regions of Senegal. Working closely with the Ministry of Education, USAID/Basic Education will:

- target more than 50,000 vulnerable children and street children, many of whom participate in the Koranic (Islamic) school system in Senegal and, in collaboration with local religious leaders and elected officials, ensure that they get increased educational support, in addition to their current activities;
- develop a new curriculum that includes a focus on existing needs in the job market ;
- promote issues of good governance with students and help to implement them within the middle school curriculum;
- improve the management and governance of the education system in Senegal through collaboration with the Parent-Teacher Associations;
- increase WiFi access in over 400 schools and provide training on new technologies that will support learning in the schools; and
- encourage public-private partnerships and implement a national campaign to raise awareness regarding the importance of public-private partnerships in the education sector.

“The success of this program will depend on all the actors—political, technical and social” said Kevin J. Mullally, Director, USAID/Senegal. “I am convinced that by working together with all those who are interested in improving middle school education in Senegal, at the end of five years’ time we will have given these excluded children a new chance to learn, to grow and to succeed.”

The project is a cooperative agreement between USAID, the Academy for Educational Development, and its sub-grantees, RTI and Counterpart International.

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