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UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT LAUNCHES FLAGSHIP PROGRAM IN BAUCHI STATE

On Thursday, March 18, 2010, the Mission Director of the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), Dr. Ray Kirkland, and the Governor of Bauchi State, Mallam Isa Yuguda, launched USAID's development program in Bauchi State with the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding in Bauchi. The United States of America, acting through USAID, will provide approximately US\$169 million, subject to the availability of funds, to undertake activities in Sokoto and Bauchi states over a five-year period. To implement these activities, USAID will partner with the Government of Nigeria to support its long-term vision to tackle the most critical social and economic development issues that have confronted the country.

USAID's program in Bauchi State is being boosted with some new projects. The "Two States High Impact Project", which began six months ago, is an integrated maternal, newborn, and child health initiative which uses high impact and low-cost interventions to reduce maternal and child deaths. The "Northern Education Initiative" will strengthen state and local government systems that lay the foundation for delivering quality education services and improving access of 15,000 orphans and vulnerable children to basic education, preventive health education, psychosocial support, and referral health services. The "Leadership, Empowerment, Advocacy and Development" program will promote democratic local governance, building capacity to assume greater roles in addressing the needs of the citizenry with a view to improving the delivery of basic services.

USAID's partnership with Bauchi State has, over the years, yielded positive results in strengthening routine immunization, maternal and child health, reproductive health and family planning. This partnership has also been instrumental in reducing polio in Bauchi.