

Press Release



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USAID Provides School Supplies for Students in Drought Affected Areas

Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, December 27, 2016 – The U.S. Government, through the United States Agency for International Development, has completed the printing and delivery of critical scholastic materials for an estimated 2.8 million boys and girls throughout Ethiopia. USAID’s efforts were aimed at protecting vulnerable children’s right to education, following one of the worst droughts in Ethiopia in more than 50 years.

More than 8.2 million exercise books have been distributed to the most drought-affected *woredas* (districts) in Afar, Amhara Dire Dawa, Harari, Oromia, Gambella, SNNP, Somali and Tigray. In addition to these 8.2 million exercise books, USAID also delivered more than 5.5 million pens and pencils to affected schools and communities. USAID contracted Yekatit Paper Converting PLC, a local Ethiopian publishing company, as well as a small business in the United States, to quickly procure and deliver these materials for Ethiopia’s most affected students in grades one to eight. The Ministry of Education and regional education bureaus played key roles by ensuring the delivery of these materials to local schools.

“With these critical scholastic materials, USAID and the Ministry of Education have effectively increased students’ engagement in the school system and eased the transition back to school for millions of students whose continued education was threatened due to the lingering effects of the recent drought,” said USAID Ethiopia Mission Director Leslie Reed.

USAID determined that a targeted intervention would ease some of the hardships that traditionally impede students’ return to school following humanitarian crises. Globally, past experience and research indicates that students who drop out of school are less likely to contribute as productive members of their communities, and earn less throughout their lives while facing an increased risk of early marriage, trafficking, and child labor.

USAID is one of the leading education bilateral donors in Ethiopia and works in close collaboration with a range of partners to reach 15 million Ethiopian children with improved educational services.

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