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Twinning Center Launches Partnership to Build Social Work Training Capacity, Improve OVC Care in Nigeria

New program will help support orphans and vulnerable children by training social workers and allied caregivers in Nigeria's Enugu State

WASHINGTON, DC, September 19, 2008 — The American International Health Alliance (AIHA) has established a new partnership through its HIV/AIDS Twinning Center Program that will support the US President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR) by training social workers and para-professionals to provide much-needed care and support to Nigerian children orphaned or made vulnerable by HIV/AIDS in the West African nation's Enugu State.

Hunter College School of Social Work in New York City is partnering with the Federal School of Social Work in the city of Enugu and the Department of Social Works and Sociology at the University of Nigeria in Nsukka. Together, partners will work to strengthen the capacity of both Nigerian institutions to provide in-service and pre-service training in social work, case management, leadership, and other skills necessary to ensure comprehensive services are available to children and families affected by HIV/AIDS in Enugu State.

This partnership is the Twinning Center's first in Nigeria, and was established with support from PEPFAR and CDC/Nigeria in close cooperation with Nigeria's Federal Ministry of Women's Affairs and Social Development.

Hunter College School of Social Work will draw on its more than 50 years of experience training social workers and para-social workers, tapping into a broad and varied network of local service delivery and professional organizations, including the New York City Administration for Children's Services, the National Association of Social Workers, the National Association of Black Social Workers, the Nigerian Social Workers Association, and Howard University School of Social Work in Washington, DC.

Partners from Hunter College and the US-based Nigerian Social Workers Association will travel to Nigeria September 22-26, where they will meet with their counterparts, conduct an initial situational and needs assessment at both Nigerian institutions, visit local OVC and AIDS service organizations, and begin to jointly develop a plan that will guide their capacity-building efforts.

Funded by the US Department of Health and Human Services' Health Resources and Services Administration, the HIV/AIDS Twinning Center mobilizes and coordinates the resources of US healthcare providers to effectively build capacity to reduce HIV infection rates and provide care to those infected with, or affected by, HIV/AIDS in countries targeted for PEPFAR assistance.

For more information on the HIV/AIDS Twinning Center, visit www.TwinningAgainstAIDS.org. For more information about AIHA, visit our Web site at www.aiha.com.

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