

Opportunity International Partners with Credit Suisse to Expand Education Finance around the World

The three-year 'Empowering Generational Change through Education' program will help educate 530,000 children in 10 countries across Latin America, Africa and Asia

OAK BROOK, Ill. – December 11, 2014 – Today, Opportunity International, the premier global financial services organization for the poor, announced Credit Suisse will help support a new education initiative to improve the quality, availability and affordability of education in impoverished areas of Latin America, Africa and Asia.

“Investing in education is one of the most decisive ways to help people work their way out of poverty,” said Vicki Escarra, Global CEO of Opportunity International. “Research has shown that education raises a student’s future economic status and can even extend life expectancy. We look forward to continuing our important partnership with Credit Suisse to expand educational opportunities for thousands of youth through access to financial services.”

Building on a successful six-year partnership with Credit Suisse, this new three-year program will launch education finance initiatives in Colombia and Tanzania and expand existing programs in the Dominican Republic, Ghana, Kenya, Malawi, Rwanda, Uganda, India and the Philippines to help more than 530,000 children and youth through a combination of innovative savings, lending, insurance and financial education products and services. Specifically, the initiative will provide school improvement loans to help build and expand schools, hire and train teachers, provide lunches and help pay for other activities to increase the number of students in school and improve the quality of education they receive. The initiative will also provide school fee loans to help parents pay tuition and buy books and other school supplies to ensure their children stay in school regardless of family income fluctuations.

“More than 67 million children worldwide are not enrolled in schools, often because their family simply cannot afford the costs of school fees, tuition or supplies, or because quality education isn’t available where they live,” said Manuel Rybach, Global Head Corporate Citizenship and Foundations for Credit Suisse. “Credit Suisse and Opportunity International understand that investing in education is an investment in the future. That’s why we’ve partnered— to ensure that children around the world have opportunities to learn and grow.”

An estimated 7.1 million people have already benefited from the partnership between Opportunity International and Credit Suisse’s Microfinance Capacity Building Initiative through support of electronic-banking transactions, training for microfinance staff and financial services

for people in impoverished areas. The new “Empowering Generational Change through Education” initiative aims to achieve the following goals:

- Provide 2,200 school improvement loans to private school proprietors, impacting the access and quality of education for approximately 484,000 students.
- Provide 52,000 school-fee loans to parents and students to help parents to pay tuition and fees, impacting the education of approximately 161,000 students.
- Pilot and expand additional educational services to provide young people with a formal education and the skills they need to get a job. Services provided will include child savings accounts and youth financial education in Africa; and the EduSave program—an innovative, free insurance program to cover a child’s school costs in the event of a parent or guardian’s death or permanent disability.
- Provide education finance bank staff with training and development opportunities to help them service Opportunity’s growing educational programs.

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ABOUT CREDIT SUISSE AG

Credit Suisse AG is one of the world's leading financial services providers and is part of the Credit Suisse group of companies (referred to here as 'Credit Suisse'). As an integrated bank, Credit Suisse is able to offer clients its expertise in the areas of private banking, investment banking and asset management from a single source. Credit Suisse provides specialist advisory services, comprehensive solutions and innovative products to companies, institutional clients and high net worth private clients worldwide, and also to retail clients in Switzerland. Credit Suisse is headquartered in Zurich and operates in over 50 countries worldwide. The group employs approximately 45,500 people. The registered shares (CSGN) of Credit Suisse's parent company, Credit Suisse Group AG, are listed in Switzerland and, in the form of American Depositary Shares (CS), in New York. Further information about Credit Suisse can be found at www.credit-suisse.com.

Through its [Microfinance Capacity Building initiative](#), Credit Suisse works with microfinance institutions such as Opportunity International to strengthen their ability to serve the diverse financial needs of clients at the base of the pyramid. www.credit-suisse.com/microfinance

ABOUT OPPORTUNITY INTERNATIONAL

Opportunity International is a global non-profit organization that helps people in developing nations work their way out of poverty, strengthen their families and improve their communities. Founded in 1971, the organization has provided more than \$8.5 billion in loans, savings programs, insurance, and other financial services and training to more than 12 million clients in 22 countries across Africa, Asia, Latin America and Europe. Clients use the resources to expand businesses, provide for their families and create jobs in their communities. The U.S. headquarters of Opportunity International are in Oak Brook, Ill., with other key offices in Australia, Canada, Germany, Hong Kong, Singapore, Switzerland and the United Kingdom. The organization proudly employs more than 17,500 people around the world. Discover more at opportunity.org.

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