

Basic Education 765,000 People To Benefit From Literacy

■ *The five-year programme is implemented in the North West, East, Adamawa and North Regions by Nascent Solutions Incorporated.*

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Through the McGovern-Dole International Food for Education and Child Nutrition Programme funded by the United States Department for Agriculture, USDA, Nascent Solutions Incorporated, an international charity, secured 27 million US dollars (15.2 billion FCFA) to carry out a literacy and nutrition programme. Intended for elementary schools in the North West, East, Adamawa and North Regions, the project runs from 2018-2023.

On Thursday, July 23, 2020, Nascent Solutions organised simultaneous ceremonies in Kette, East Region, Meiganga, Adamawa Region and Guider in the North Region to publicly acknowledge the outstanding services of 148 teachers from 148 primary schools during the 2019/2020 academic year. The teachers were recognised for their diligence and for ensuring that pupils paid great attention to lessons and attended classes regularly.

At the end of five years, the project is expected to benefit 765,000 pupils, family members, teachers, administrators, civil servants, Parent Teacher Association, PTA members, and others associated with the 240 primary schools selected for us by the Ministry of Basic Education in the four regions. The 240 schools are also expected to have more than



The provision of daily midday meals is a staple activity in the programme.

100,000 enrolled pupils and more than 1,300 teachers by 2023.

While the primary goal is improving literacy, the project's staple activity is the provision of daily midday meals offered by USDA. Nascent Solutions also seeks to improve school infrastructure improvements, increased community understanding of education benefits and use of positive health and dietary practices, and ensure increased access to clean water and sanitation.

From October 2019 to March 2020, the project trained 6,213 volunteer kitchen staff and other community members on improved hygiene and 329 PTA members on food management. Some 14,072 school community members received training on child health and nutrition,

with 1,405 on improved gardening methods. With the support of the Ministry of Public Health, deworming medication was distributed to 16,173 pupils; while the construction of 7 latrines and 23 kitchens and storage units was completed. The Adamawa, East, North and North West Regions are predominantly agrarian, yet experience annual food shortages largely because of the use of poor agricultural practices and little or no mechanism for storage or processing. The educational system suffers from poorly motivated teachers and administrators, underfunding, dilapidated infrastructure, lack of school feeding programmes, insufficient teaching material, teacher absenteeism, and a policy environment resistant to change.