

New TV Program 'Sesame Square' Promotes Lifetime of Learning and Wellness for Nigerian Children

Sesame Street, the longest street in the world, has reached Nigeria, bringing with it new Muppet friends like Kami and Zobi, along with familiar furry faces like Elmo and Grover, to bring entertaining educational lessons to children and families across Nigeria.

On May 17, the U.S. Ambassador to Nigeria Terence P. McCulley formally launched *Sesame Square* at the Nigerian Television Authority (NTA) Headquarters in Abuja. A Nigerian adaptation of "Sesame Street," *Sesame Square* uses the beloved characters to teach children and families in Nigeria about the value of education, about reading, math and health.

Joining other dignitaries at the launching, Ambassador. McCulley praised the groundbreaking partnership between the United States, the Sesame Workshop, the Ministry of Education and NTA to develop *Sesame Square* to help ensure that all Nigerian children have access to basic education by making educational programs available through the media.



Photo caption: Ambassador Terence McCulley chats with Kami and Zobi during the NTA launch ceremony for "*Sesame Square*." Embassy Photo by Idika Onyukwu.

"This is especially important for children who may not have access to traditional educational opportunities. It is our hope that through the generous support of the American people, *Sesame Square* will help put the children of Nigeria on a positive path for a lifetime of learning and wellness. The U.S. Government is proud to be a part of this project," said Ambassador McCulley.

Sesame Square is funded by the United States through the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) and is co-produced by Nigerian production house Ileke Media and the Sesame Workshop, the non-profit educational organization behind *Sesame Street*.

Sesame Square premiered on Saturday, May 21st at 9:30AM and will air on NTA every Saturday in the same timeslot and on Sundays at 5:00 PM. Season one of *Sesame Square* consists of 26 half-hour television episodes designed to promote fundamental literacy, numeracy, good hygiene habits and health (including malaria prevention and HIV/AIDS education) in settings that foster children's self-esteem, cultural pride, and respect for differences and diversity.