



For Immediate Release

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World Cocoa Foundation, USAID and IDH Launch the African Cocoa Initiative

October 18, 2011, Washington, DC – The World Cocoa Foundation (WCF), U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) and the Sustainable Trade Initiative (IDH) announced today that the new African Cocoa Initiative (WCF/ACI), a Global Development Alliance partnership to invest in sustainable cocoa programs in West Africa, will be launched in the coming weeks.

Cocoa is one of the most significant crops in West and Central Africa, 90 percent of which is grown on 2 million small family farms. WCF/ACI is a five-year, \$13.5 million program in the four producing countries of Côte d'Ivoire, Ghana, Cameroon and Nigeria that will develop their cocoa sector in four critical areas: foster public-private cooperative investments in cocoa and agriculture, improve the genetic quality and productivity of the cocoa varieties under cultivation, expand farmer education and training programs, and improve the agriculture input supply chains that serve the farmers. Through WCF/ACI, the partner institutions, USAID, WCF and IDH, are contributing significant funding and expertise to improve farmer incomes, alleviate poverty, strengthen government and regional institutions, and help advance food security throughout the region. This advances the goals of the U.S. government's Feed the Future Initiative to increase agricultural productivity and the economic well-being of smallholder farmers.

The four national governments have each endorsed WCF/ACI and are committing their agencies to participating and investing in its sponsored activities. Additionally, important international organizations will be contributing to its implementation. These include the International Institute of Tropical Agriculture (IITA), the Alliance of Cocoa Producing Countries (COPAL) and the IFDC, which will be instrumental in providing expertise in genetics, cocoa policy and fertilizers, respectively, to the program. The program will be headquartered at WCF's office in Accra, Ghana to support activities across the region. Private sector funding for this program comes from WCF member companies ADM Cocoa, Barry Callebaut, Blommer Chocolate Company, Cargill, Continaf BV, Ferrero, Guittard Chocolate Company, The Hershey Company, Kraft Foods, Lindt & Sprüngli, Nestlé, and Olam International Ltd.

Bill Guyton, President of WCF, said "We are very pleased to launch this significant new partnership with USAID, WCF member companies, and the Sustainable Trade Initiative. WCF/ACI complements our existing programs and will enable us to reach many more cocoa farmers and build new partnerships in West and Central Africa."



“We are looking forward to supporting the important new cocoa initiative in West and Central Africa with the program partners” explained Joost Oorthuizen, Executive Director of the Sustainable Trade Initiative, based in the Netherlands.

“Feed the Future, the U.S. government’s global hunger and food security initiative, is proud to be a major contributor to the African Cocoa Initiative through USAID. We look forward to this key public-private partnership which will benefit smallholder cocoa growers in West Africa. We view our private sector partners as thought leaders who can bring crucial feedback, a fresh perspective, and innovative insights to the development table,” says Margaret Enis, Director of the Office of Markets, Partnerships and Innovation, USAID Bureau for Food Security.

*The **World Cocoa Foundation (WCF)** is an international membership foundation that promotes a sustainable cocoa economy by providing cocoa farmers with the tools they need to grow more and better cocoa, market it successfully, and make greater profits. These efforts help increase the supply of cocoa and help guarantee chocolate lovers access to their favorite products. WCF’s membership includes cocoa and chocolate manufacturers, processors, supply chain managers, and other companies worldwide, representing more than 80% of the global cocoa market. For more information, visit www.worldcocoa.org.*

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