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### **Over 160,000 to Benefit from World Cocoa Foundation Youth Education Program in West Africa**

*Two-year, \$5.6 million public-private partnership to focus on youth and young adults in  
Côte d'Ivoire and Ghana*

WASHINGTON DC – The World Cocoa Foundation today announced a public-private partnership for rural education with the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) Africa Education Initiative and its members Kraft Foods; The Hershey Company; Mars, Incorporated; Starbucks Coffee Company; Fazer Confectionery; Olam International Ltd.; The Hain Celestial Group, Inc.'s SunSpire brand; Guittard Chocolate Company and Barry Callebaut as well as The Jacobs Foundation and the Norwegian Association of Chocolate Manufacturers. The initial two-year program began in October 2007; the \$5.6 million cash and \$2 million in-kind contributions will extend the program for an additional two years through September 2011.

The Empowering Cocoa Households with Opportunities and Education Solutions (ECHOES) Alliance in Côte d'Ivoire and Ghana has already reached thousands of young people directly through vocational agricultural training and indirectly by training teachers in interactive teaching approaches. The program aims to develop a replicable, scalable model for improving education in rural West Africa.

Dr. Sarah Moten, coordinator of USAID's Africa Education Initiative, commented, "We're very happy about what ECHOES has been able to accomplish in just two years and we look forward to even more dramatic success as we bring access to the world's sources of knowledge to young people in rural Africa. They are the next generation of leaders and the future of the continent. We need to give them every chance for success."

In its second phase, the program will place more of an emphasis on directly reaching youth and young adults. Activities will focus on in-school education at the primary and secondary school levels; training for out-of-school youth; agriculture-related extracurricular

activities; family support scholarships; and literacy training. Additionally, the program will train teachers working in cocoa-growing communities. Overall, these activities will directly benefit over 20,000 young people and indirectly impact an additional 140,000 people across both countries.

The program will build on the successes of the first two years while incorporating new elements such as using information technology to improve learning, encourage community education, and private education activities.

“Improving the quality and relevancy of education in cocoa-growing communities is essential to expanding opportunities for young people and ensuring the long-term sustainability of the cocoa sector. It is wonderful that USAID, the private sector and the governments of Côte d’Ivoire and Ghana have been so supportive of our efforts to continue this important work,” said WCF President Bill Guyton.

### **About the World Cocoa Foundation**

Established in 2000, the World Cocoa Foundation is a leader in promoting economic and social development and environmental stewardship in 15 cocoa-producing countries around the world. With approximately 70 member companies from the Americas, Europe, Asia and Africa, the Foundation actively supports a range of farm-level programs harnessing sustainable agriculture practices to improve the quality of life for the millions of smallholder farmers growing this unique crop. For more information about the World Cocoa Foundation, visit: [www.worldcocoafoundation.org](http://www.worldcocoafoundation.org)

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