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## **World Cocoa Foundation Announces Launch of Cocoa Livelihoods Program in Ghana**

### **Five-Year Program to Reach Nearly 60,000 Smallholder Farmers in Ghana**

ACCRA – At a ceremony held in Accra, the World Cocoa Foundation today announced the launch of the Cocoa Livelihoods Program (CLP) in Ghana. The program, first announced in February 2009, is funded by the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation and 12 chocolate industry companies and is expected to significantly improve the livelihoods of nearly 60,000 cocoa farmers in Ghana over the next five years.

“We welcome this opportunity to improve the lives of so many Ghanaian cocoa farmers and look forward to collaborating with other stakeholders to make this program a success,” said Mr. Anthony Fofie, CEO, Ghana Cocoa Board, “Since February, the Ghana Cocoa Board has been actively engaged on the program’s Steering Committee helping to plan for the start of activities in the 2010 growing season.”

The work in Ghana is part of a larger, five country program targeting 200,000 cocoa-growing households across Ghana, Côte d’Ivoire, Nigeria, Cameroon and Liberia. Activities in Ghana will focus on improving production and quality at the farm level, equipping farmers with business skills, promoting diversification of income, and improving access to inputs and support services. In Ghana, 21 districts in the Ashanti, Eastern, Brong-Ahafo, Western and Central Regions will benefit from the program. Accra will serve as the headquarters for the program.

“Making real progress against hunger and poverty starts with small farmers,” said Richard Rogers, program officer at the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, “Crops like cocoa represent a critical portion of Africa’s agricultural economy, and improving farmer knowledge and productivity, and the quality of the cocoa production, can help these small farmers boost their yields and incomes so they can improve their lives.”

“This program builds on the success of previous government initiatives and cocoa sector development programs, like the Sustainable Tree Crops Program funded by the U.S. Agency for International Development and the cocoa industry,” said Mbalo Ndiaye of the World Cocoa Foundation, the program’s director. “The experiences of these programs were essential in informing the design of the Cocoa Livelihoods Program and improving the sustainability of cocoa.”

The Cocoa Livelihoods Program is managed by the World Cocoa Foundation and implemented through a consortium of five organizations including Agribusiness Services International (ASI) an ACDI/VOCA affiliate, Deutsche Gesellschaft für Technische Zusammenarbeit (GTZ) GmbH, the International Institute of Tropical Agriculture (IITA)/Sustainable Tree Crops Program (STCP), SOCODEVI and TechnoServe. Funding for the program comes from the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation and the private sector: major branded manufacturers The Hershey Company, Kraft Foods and Mars, Incorporated; cocoa processors Archer Daniels Midland Company, Barry Callebaut, Blommer Chocolate Company and Cargill; and supply chain managers and allied industries Armajaro, Ecom-Agrocaao, Noble Group (Noble Cocoa), Olam International Ltd. and Starbucks Coffee Company. Additional support is provided by the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ). Each country government has a representative on the Steering Committee.

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### **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 nearly 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)