



Sustainable Tree Crops Program (STCP) *West African Development Alliance*

The **STCP West African Development Alliance** radiates from the core alliance formed in 1998 between USAID and the worldwide chocolate and cocoa industry and trade, who share a common interest in promoting the production and marketing of quality cacao, improving market access and income for small-scale producers, and creating systems that are environmentally friendly, socially responsible, and economically sustainable. Over 70% of the world's supply of cocoa is produced in West Africa. Additional partners who share the vision of the STCP program have also joined the alliance and are now working together to build on the initial foundation.

The STCP seeks to improve the economic and social well being of smallholding farmers and the sustainability of tree crop systems. The **STCP West African Development Alliance** provides a framework of collaboration between farmer and producer organisations, the worldwide cocoa trade and chocolate industry, national governments, research institutes, the public sector, policy makers, donor and development agencies.

The STCP regional program was launched recently at a workshop in Accra, Ghana where a series of three-year pilot programs were introduced. The pilots will be implemented in a strategic manner to ensure a sustainable livelihood for farmers, to promote socially acceptable forms of labour use, and to encourage environmentally sound growing practices for cocoa and cashew nuts. These programs will be implemented immediately in Cameroon, Côte d'Ivoire, Ghana, Guinea and Nigeria by local and international non-governmental organizations, farmer organizations, local governments and civil society organizations.

To achieve its goal of improving the economic and social well being of smallholding farmers, the STCP Alliance is focusing its resources and support on the following areas:

- Social systems that promote responsible labour practices and government delivery of social services;
- Strengthening farmer and community organisations and the private sector;
- Research and technology support to promote environmentally sustainable farming, and improve farmer incomes;
- Policy change to increase the efficiency of the tree crop sector; and
- Trade and information systems to improve farmer income, and product quality.

The Alliance agrees that the success of this program depends upon frequent communication and co-ordination among Alliance members, transparency, accountability and, most importantly, timely, effective implementation of program elements.

The Alliance draws its strength from the holistic approach that is the essence of the pilot programs launched at the workshop, and of the Alliance itself. By working together, the Alliance will contribute to improving the well being of tree crop farmers and workers, their families and the communities in which they live.

The Alliance committed support for the three-year action plan being implemented in the five countries and to building this Alliance with government agencies, other development agencies, and industry groups to increase the number beneficiaries and enhance future development.