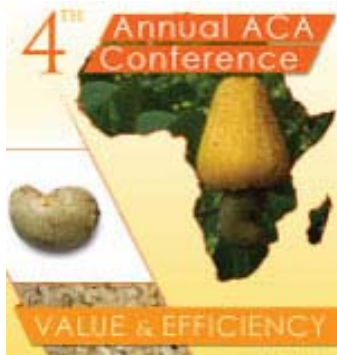




## SUCCESS STORY

# As Alliance grows, so does business

**The African Cashew Alliance is winning business for the industry in West Africa, creating jobs and increasing incomes**



*The ACA's 4<sup>th</sup> Annual Conference in Abidjan, Cote d'Ivoire, brought the global industry together – just as it does every day for over 100 members from around the world.*

*The African Cashew Alliance is bringing the industry together, winning business for the region and building a network of private and public sector partners to create jobs and increase incomes.*

September 2, 2009, might very well go down as a seminal moment in the history of the world cashew industry: In a break-out meeting room at the African Cashew Alliance's 4<sup>th</sup> Annual Conference in Abidjan, Cote d'Ivoire, representatives of the world's leading cashew-producing countries met and laid the foundation of a world cashew alliance.

"The conference created a venue for us to meet," said Walter D'Souza, chairman of the Cashew Export Promotion Council of India, where half of the world's cashews ultimately are processed, including much of the West African crop. "The Brazilians have come, the Vietnamese have come. Unless Africa is an integral part of this alliance, things cannot move.

"The African Cashew Alliance will be an important part of this global alliance," he added. "Everyone will have a role to play."

Since co-founding the ACA with private sector partners in 2005, USAID's West Africa Trade Hub has housed its secretariat, an increasingly busy operation that tracks and connects industry activity involving more than 50 members from around the world. In 2009, the ACA's work bore fruit when the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation approved \$25 million to support the African Cashew Initiative, based on a proposal that included information about the industry's potential provided by ACA members. An added \$25 million in private sector contributions will help the Initiative work to increase the incomes of rural cashew farmers, create more than 5,000 jobs in local processing and improve the marketing of cashew globally.

The ACA's value remains firmly in its private sector orientation. The alliance continues to bring business together to address issues and, more importantly, make the deals that will lead to thousands of jobs and hundreds of millions of dollars in revenue for West Africa. In the last year, its membership has doubled.

"We saw a lot of enthusiastic people looking to develop cashew processing in West Africa," said Marc Rosenblatt of the Richard Franco Agency, an international cashew broker. "If it can be done we certainly know that we can sell it."