

Western Union and USAID to launch second African Diaspora Marketplace

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WASHINGTON, D.C. – The Western Union Company (NYSE:WU) a leader in global payment services, and the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) announced they will launch a second African Diaspora Marketplace (ADM) in the fourth quarter of 2011. The ADM encourages sustainable economic growth and employment by supporting U.S.-based African Diaspora entrepreneurs with innovating and high-impact ideas for start-up and established businesses in Sub-Saharan Africa.

The new Marketplace will incorporate key learning from the first African Diaspora Marketplace, by focusing grants toward priority, high-impact sectors in Africa, including agribusiness, renewable energy, and information and communication technology (ICT). To expand upon their previous success, Western Union and USAID will invite small business investment funds and technical assistance mentors to participate in the effort to engage Diaspora entrepreneurs. In 2010, the ADM awarded more than a dozen matching grants of \$100,000 each to winning business entries in seven countries. As a result, grantees have established the first mobile anti-counterfeiting service for pharmaceutical drugs in Nigeria, launched the first GPS tracking system to prevent product loss in Ethiopia, and established a high-speed ferry system powered by locally-produced sunflower oil in East Africa.

“We are committed to promoting economic growth in Africa,” said Hikmet Ersek, Western Union President and CEO. “The inaugural African Diaspora Marketplace has generated innovative firsts in new business sectors, strengthened demand for locally-produced products and services, and enabled winning businesses to leverage additional capital and resources. With the ADM, Western Union can leverage its expertise providing services to small-medium businesses and its vast network and resources to help create lasting social and economic impact.”

Western Union announced its continued partnership with USAID on stage with U.S. Secretary of State Hillary Clinton, during the Secretary’s Global Diaspora Forum, an event held in Washington, D.C. to recognize and celebrate the contribution of Diaspora communities to their countries of origin or ancestry.

“Small and medium enterprises provide the majority of employment opportunities globally,” said USAID Administrator Dr. Rajiv Shah. “Entrepreneurship can be a powerful tool to enhance economic opportunity and empower communities, and Diasporas often play a powerful role in starting businesses and mentoring emerging entrepreneurs, so we are pleased to work once again with Western Union on ADM-II.”

More details on ADM-II will be announced later this year, including the participating countries in sub-Saharan Africa, the size of the new funding pool, and the full range of partners who join USAID, The Western Union Company, and the Western Union Foundation in the effort. ADM grantees awarded funds in 2010 are seeing business innovation take shape in several countries. Sproxil, Inc. provides anti-counterfeiting solutions to pharmaceutical and consumer product companies targeting emerging markets in Africa, and has established the first national mobile-based anti-counterfeit service, starting in Nigeria.

Global Tracking, PLC has launched the first-ever GPS tracking system for monitoring commercial fleets in Ethiopia. The business aims to contribute to economic growth, previously

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hindered by theft and loss of cargo.

And Earthwise Ferries is reestablishing, managing and operating a fast-ferry transportation system on Lake Victoria, with destinations in Uganda, Kenya and Tanzania. Earthwise has enlisted 600 indigenous farmers to grow sunflower seeds to produce the vegetable oil which will power the ferries.

Information about these and more ADM winners can be found at www.diasporamarketplace.org

For more information about Western Union, visit www.westernunion.com . For more information about Western Union's Our Word, Our Family® program, visit foundation.westernunion.com

For more information about USAID and its programs around the world, please visit www.usaid.gov