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PRESS RELEASE

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USAID Supports Center to Boost Nigeria-U.S. Trade

Abuja, Nigeria – On April 12 and 13, the U.S. Agency for International Development’s West Africa Trade and Investment Hub (Trade Hub) trained coordinators from seven West African countries to assist businesses with the processes and documentation required for exporting to the United States under the African Growth and Opportunity Act (AGOA). Coordinators from AGOA Trade Resource Centers (ATRCs) in Nigeria as well as Benin, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Côte d’Ivoire, Ghana, and Senegal convened for training on how to deliver services in trade intelligence, export development, business promotion and trade facilitation to existing and potential exporters. Participants also learned from best practices across the region and shared experiences in supporting exporters.

Hosted within local institutions, the ATRCs have assisted over 2,700 businesses seeking to export to the United States under AGOA, which waives duties and quotas on thousands of goods made in eligible sub-Saharan African countries. Since 2005, USAID has provided grants to build the sustainability of the ATRC network and the host institutions that provide trade-related services to private sector companies. The grants cover training and the costs of building a database of exporters, further enabling ATRCs to develop exporters’ capacity, market linkages, and sector-specific strategies to boost trade.

USAID supports greater use of AGOA’s tariff advantages across West Africa. Each ATRC is expected to undertake activities that enhance the export potential of companies seeking to take advantage of AGOA. These activities include: developing and providing trade intelligence services through trade and business associations or directly to individual businesses; promoting trade and export development advisory services by providing hands-on assistance directly to companies to help them understand market requirements and regulations, packaging/labeling, costing, and finance; providing business promotion services with trade show/fair participation and facilitation of regional and international business linkages; and providing customs documentation assistance to businesses.

This support is building a solid and sustainable network of local institutions that can tailor services to the private sector to enhance their capacity to trade regionally and export to international markets.

The ATRC in Abuja is located at the Nigerian Export Promotion Council, Plot 424, Aguiyi Ironsi Street, Maitama. For additional information, please contact Joseph Ogungbade, the ATRC coordinator, by phone at +234-803-604-5705 or via e-mail at joeog2001@yahoo.com.

NOTES TO EDITORS:

USAID's West Africa Trade and Investment Hub works with key African partners to promote reforms, attract buyers and investors, and adopt improved practices. Trade Hub experts also lead public-private stakeholder efforts to address constraints to trade competitiveness, capture opportunities to expand trade, demonstrate West Africa's productive potential to investors, and facilitate greater investment in the region. For more information, please visit www.watradehub.com.

This activity is supported through the USAID West Africa Regional Office, whose goal is to promote social and economic well-being advanced by West Africans. Spanning 21 countries, USAID/West Africa designs and implements programs with West African partners to strengthen systems of non-violent conflict management, support economic growth, and expand quality health services. The American people, through USAID, provide economic and humanitarian assistance in more than 100 countries worldwide. For more information, please visit <http://www.usaid.gov/west-africa-regional>.

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