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Press release

Danish Minister recognises AAK's efforts for women in West Africa

At a ceremony today, AAK was awarded a torch by Ulla Tørnæs, the Danish Minister for Development Cooperation. Trading Director Knud Larsson, AAK, received the torch, which is part of a global campaign on empowerment of women and gender equality.

For several years, AAK has been present in West Africa due to our work in the area to source shea, which is an important raw material for our production of vegetable oils, and which grows in the wild in West Africa. AAK has introduced a range of initiatives to help West African women make a living and is deeply involved in empowerment projects.

The torch was given to AAK in recognition of our work for the women, and AAK is indeed a proud recipient. Said Trading Director Knud Larsson: "We have realised that our need for security of supply goes hand in hand with the women's need for a secure source of income from their farmwork. Therefore, our aim is to help create growth and development among the West African women."

AAK's focus on West Africa is on three issues:

- our participation in the UNDP project (United Nations Development Programme) on establishing so-called multi-functional platforms that ease the workload of daily chores on the West African women – making it possible for them to earn a living,
- minimising the number of middlemen in the supply chain who add no value, in order to pay the women a proper remuneration for their work instead of paying the middlemen,
- stimulating the forming of women's groups, in order to create units that can trade directly with AAK.

The torch is awarded to persons and companies that make a difference in the work for empowering women. It is part of the campaign Millenium Development Goal no. 3 as agreed by the UN. "Therefore, AAK feels highly motivated to continue such efforts," said Knud Larsson.



The award ceremony took place at the ARoS Art Museum in Aarhus, Denmark, in connection with a conference on UN Global Compact and how to implement the Global Compact principles in CSR activities. At the conference, AAK's Global CSR Manager Jesper Korning spoke on strategic partnerships.

For further information, please contact

Bo Svensson, CIO
Tel.: +46 (0)40 627 83 00
Mobile: +46 (0)708 182 193
E-mail: bo.svensson@aak.com

Knud Larsson, Trading Director
Tel.: +45 8730 6248
Mobile: +45 4017 4115
E-mail: knud.larsson@aak.com

Jesper Korning, Global CSR Manager
Tel.: +45 8730 6114
Mobile: +45 2149 8527
E-mail: jesper.korning@aak.com

Facts/AAK

AAK is the world's leading manufacturer of high value-added speciality vegetable fats. These fats are used as substitutes for butterfat and cocoa butter substitutes, as transfree solutions for fillings for chocolate and confectionery products, and in the cosmetics industry. AAK has production facilities in Denmark, the Netherlands, Mexico, Great Britain, Sweden, Uruguay and the US. Read more at www.aak.com.