

**PRESS RELEASE**  
**February 11, 2010**

## **DDII Receives 2010 JCK Industry Fund Grant**

The Board of Directors of the Diamond Development Initiative International (DDII) is very pleased to announce that the organization has been awarded a grant from the JCK Industry Fund.

The JCK Industry Fund aims to address problems and challenges facing the jewelry industry, and to assist organizations and associations in developing training materials for its membership and the industry at large.

The JCK award will assist DDII in its effort to develop and create 'Development Diamond Standards', a verifiable certification system for artisanally mined diamonds. DDS will be a tool for addressing development issues and formalizing the artisanal diamond mining sector, and will be a foundation for enhancing the effectiveness of the Kimberley Process regulatory mechanism. The standards will enable artisanal diamond miners to play an active role as change agents in their own communities, changing a legacy of chaos and victimization with a proactive tool for positive development. The grant will also help DDII tell the development diamond story to the wider jewelry industry.

Dorothee Gizenga, DDII's Executive Director, said, 'The confidence that the JCK Fund is showing in DDII is an important signal to the people we work with at the grass roots, that the industry is concerned about them. It is also an important signal to the governments and civil society organizations that we work with – and the others we hope to attract to our aims and objectives – that the industry is a valued and necessary player in this joint approach to some of the most basic problems in the alluvial diamond fields of Africa and South America.'

There are an estimated 1.3 million artisanal diamond diggers across Africa, serving as the primary breadwinner for families that total as many as 10 million people. These diggers earn, on average, about a dollar a day, and there are tens of thousands like them in South America. Historically, governments have treated them as criminals and have attempted to drive them away. After 75 years, this is clearly not the solution. Regulation and the rule of law are important, but DDII believes that economic problems and the poverty that lures people to the diamond fields also require economic and development solutions. The creation of verifiable standards for 'development diamonds' is one step in this direction.

'We are thrilled that the JCK Fund has supported the initiative,' said DDII Board Chair Ian Smillie. 'The positive impact at the source of the diamond pipeline will, in time, be enormous.'

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*DDII is a registered, charitable organization bringing civil society, governments and business together in a common effort to ensure that diamonds produced by artisanal miners can be a genuine driver of development.*