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## NetHope West Africa Chapter Forms

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**Accra, Ghana. 18<sup>th</sup> March 2008:** NetHope International - a US based global information technology alliance of 22 of the world's largest aid agencies announced the formation of its West Africa chapter today in Accra, Ghana – a move that is designed to facilitate cooperation and collaboration among humanitarian agencies operating in the region.

Building upon the collaboration success of other NetHope chapters, the West Africa NetHope Chapter was formed and met for the first time. The meeting was hosted by NetHope member ActionAid Ghana. Participating NetHope member organizations included ActionAid, Catholic Relief Services, International Federation of Red Cross, Plan and World Vision. NetHope also invited Engender Health to participate in the West Africa Chapter and they were welcomed.

“West Africa may be one of the least connected areas where humanitarian agencies work. The challenges go beyond that with a vast geography to cover. And then, we have the need to communicate in French and English. Program spending is high as there is so much work to do, but IT budgets are very lean and the infrastructures are poor across the region,” said William Brindley, NetHope CEO and Executive Director.

“The energy level at our first meeting was very high,” said Chapter Advisor Frank Schott. “Information sharing” resulted in every member receiving inputs that would either reduce their costs or improve service levels to their organizations in the region. “I was so impressed with the knowledge in the room and the willingness to share. As challenging as their jobs are, we think we can make huge gains in addressing the Humanitarian Productivity Gap that NetHope has identified as a pervasive issue around the world.”

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*NetHope ([www.nethope.org](http://www.nethope.org)): NetHope is a new generation Information and Communications Technology consortium of 22 of the international community's leading non-governmental organizations. NetHope is dedicated to the best use of available technology resources by its member agencies in order to improve their ability to deliver community benefit in the developing world. It does this by working as a highly collaborative team, sharing ICT knowledge, solving common problems, creating industry relationships to support the public benefit work of all of its members, and educating members as well as the wider community of NGOs,*

*A not-for-profit incorporated in the USA, is a global information technology consortium of nineteen of the world's leading humanitarian organizations. Headquartered in McLean, Virginia, NetHope empowers its members to offer improved services to their beneficiaries by developing innovative and sensible IT solutions, negotiating pricing discounts, providing program management services and a forum for sharing knowledge and experiences.*