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## RESOLVE Launces the Peace Diamonds Restoration Initiative

### **Jewelry Leaders Give Back by Restoring Lands Degraded by Diamond Mining**

WASHINGTON, DC – RESOLVE, a non-governmental organization forging sustainable solutions to critical social, health, and environmental challenges, announces the Peace Diamonds™ Restoration Initiative to rehabilitate land degraded by artisanal and small-scale diamond mining in developing economy countries. The initiative addresses problems associated with abandoned, water-filled pits and depleted soils, which prevent basic farming and pose safety risks to neighboring communities.

The Peace Diamonds Restoration Initiative has launched in Africa, starting in Sierra Leone, which emerged from a history of armed conflict in which diamonds played a role. Sierra Leone and other mining nations face a legacy of abandoned pits, degraded lands, and unhealthy, contaminated water. After miners leave a site, the people who inhabit the neighboring villages lose arable land needed for basic farming. They also face insect-borne diseases and other safety hazards, such as drownings, caused by flooded pits.

Through the Peace Diamonds Restoration Initiative, RESOLVE field staff work together with national and regional governments, local leaders, and other community members to turn abandoned pits into arable land for farming and other sustainable uses while improving public health. Additionally, program leaders prioritize areas that often lack regular access to international development or public support, where self-sustaining projects are needed.

The initiative also promotes gender equity at each site by promoting women's participation in early consultations and decision-making and offering entrepreneurial workshops for women and girls who, ultimately, become the primary stewards of the land following restoration.

"We have an opportunity to start again," says Fea Momoh, leader of the Sierra Leone Kuyendoya farmer-based organization, a mini-agricultural cooperative. "The wide range of support provided to us by Peace Diamonds truly brings healing and cohesion to us as a group and redeems the years we lost when these lands were not restored after diamond mining."

To date, during the pilot phase of the project, 90 abandoned diamond pits have been filled and rehabilitated into arable land using the initiative's model. The pilot projects in Sierra Leone have

yielded soil, water, air, and biodiversity benefits while contributing to new food supplies and economic opportunities for rural farmers. The initiative will now scale its efforts throughout Sierra Leone, and, over the next five years, to the Democratic Republic of Congo and other countries.

In the next stage, RESOLVE plans to share lessons from the community-based projects to inform national frameworks and help agencies develop action plans for mine site restoration, biodiversity, climate change adaptation and mitigation, sustainable food production, and promotion of alternative livelihoods.

The Peace Diamonds Restoration Initiative is the latest project to be launched under RESOLVE's Diamond Development Initiative (DDI) program. Peace Diamonds is launching with a catalytic grant from The Tiffany & Co. Foundation as a founding supporter. Brilliant Earth and the Gemological Institute of America are also providing funding to support the initiative. The design of the initiative and early pilots was supported by the Anglo American Foundation.

"The Peace Diamonds Restoration Initiative helps communities heal the land and achieve closure, and it's an ideal way for the diamond and jewelry industry, from industrial miners to retailers, to give back," says RESOLVE President and CEO Stephen D'Esposito. "We are asking industry leaders, donors and governments to join our partnership and make it an industry-wide effort to help these communities while making concrete progress on commitments outlined in the UN Sustainable Development Goals."

Companies, donors, and individuals interested in donating or becoming sponsors can visit the Peace Diamonds Restoration Initiative's website at [peacediamonds.solutions](http://peacediamonds.solutions). For more information, please contact Tommie-Lynne Enright ([tenright@resolve.ngo](mailto:tenright@resolve.ngo)).

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*RESOLVE is a non-governmental organization with a team of collaborative leaders who excel at building innovative partnerships to solve our most challenging environmental, health, and social issues. We bring a unique combination of expertise to our work: mediation and process design; solutions-focused strategies and programs; and a capacity to create and launch self-sustaining social enterprises.*