



2017 General Assembly Meeting  
Benin Royal Hotel  
Cotonou, Benin

Minutes  
March 13, 2017  
3:45pm

Agenda

- I. Distribution of Materials
- II. Welcome Remarks from the GSA Executive Committee
- III. Presentation of annual report
  - a. Sustainability Program
    - i. 2016 Program Results
    - ii. Working Group Report
    - iii. Member Testimony
  - b. Quality Standards
  - c. International Promotion Activities
  - d. Finance and Administration
- IV. Member vote to approve audit and annual report
- V. Review 2013-2016 updates to GSA Guidelines
- VI. Propose new 2017 modifications to GSA guidelines
- VII. Member vote to approve 2017 modifications to GSA guidelines
- VIII. Executive committee elections
  - a. Presentation of candidates
  - b. Vote
  - c. Closed door meeting to elect president
  - d. Presentation of EC candidates

**I. Distribution of Materials**

The GSA secretariat distributed copies of the 2016 annual report and GSA guidelines in English and French to 200 participating members of the general assembly.

**II. Call to Order and Welcome Remarks**

The meeting was called to order at 3:45pm on the authorization of President Moumouni Konate. The GSA executive committee members were seated at the front of the Assembly. The executive committee members introduced themselves as well as their represented companies and national associations. Mr. Konate welcomed all members thanking them for their active participation in GSA activities throughout the year. He wished to utilize the meeting to ensure all members understood the activities of GSA and clarify any issues. Mr. Konate reviewed the agenda and requested members to make comments and asked for any modifications.

**Discussion/Action**

Members approved the agenda as proposed.



### III. Presentation of annual report

The secretariat presented the annual report in the following four segments; the GSA sustainability program, quality standards activities, industry promotion activities, and 2016 financial audit.

#### Sustainability Program Results

The secretariat presented results from the 2016 sustainability program. The GSA recruited an additional 25 new partners during the year, increasing the total number of members participating in the program to 80. The GSA sustainability working group met on March 24<sup>th</sup> in Accra, Ghana and November 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> in Tamale, Ghana to elect a new chair, discuss best practices on biodiversity, and make field visits to ongoing partner projects.

The GSA sustainability program partners completed their second annual reporting process and the results for the 2016 period were as follows:

- **Warehouses for Women Shea Kernel Collectors:** 36 warehouses were built and donated to women's groups by members and 23,000 women were trained in warehouse management.
- **Pilot Projects to Improve Health and Safety of Women Collectors:** 9 projects were initiated by members and 7,200 women were trained on health and safety best practices.
- **Business Development of Services for Women Shea Collectors:** 20 projects were initiated by members and 130,000 women were trained in cooperative development.
- **Parkland Management Trainings:** 2 projects were initiated by members with 400 hectares of parklands are under conservations and 40,000 seedlings raised.
- **Conservation Pilot Projects:** 2 projects were initiated by members.

Two members then provided testimony on the impact of the sustainability program. A woman's group representative from Benin discussed the importance a warehouse has to promote improved pricing and livelihoods in her community. A U.S. cosmetic brand discussed their ongoing initiative to support women's health and safety in Ghana.

#### Quality Standards Achievements

5,000 women were trained on best practices in kernel collection, processing and storage. 150 small businesses received training on cosmetic formulation and packaging techniques. In collaboration with national associations, the GSA presented the member kernel standards to 6 national standard organizations for their review.

#### International Promotion Results

The secretariat presented the status of ongoing projects to expand shea markets globally including updates on the U.S. Generally Recognized as Safe project, U.S. chocolate initiative, India chocolate initiative, chocolate consumer preference study, and cosmetics research.



The secretariat then presented results of hosting international conferences and exhibitions in Accra, Washington, D.C., Brussels, Johannesburg, and Ifrane, Morocco. More than 650 participants attended the events. Additionally, the GSA participated in an 6 international events to promote industry, attract additional membership, and promote the GSA sustainability program.

The GSA added 44 new members from 13 countries during the period bringing the membership total to 430 members from 31 countries. The top membership countries in order are Nigeria, Ghana, U.S., Mali, U.K., Burkina Faso, Ivory Coast, and Benin.

### **Finance and Administration Results**

The secretariat presented fundraising results for the period including a new 5-year \$13M partnership agreement between with the U.S. Agency for International Development and the GSA.

The 2016 audit was conducted by KPMG under the direction of the GSA executive committee. The audit opinion showed “proper books of accounts of have been kept, and the statement of financial position and comprehensive income are in agreement with th books of account.”

### **Annual Report Discussion/Action**

The GSA president summarize the presentations in French and provided additional commentary to the members in order to ensure all French speaking members had properly understood the 2016 annual report. Member comments and feedback are summarized below.

- a. A member requested clarification as to why the income did not increase at the same rate as fundraising results presented. The secretariat explained funds raised will be received over a multi-year period and the income section in the audit is for the 2016 period.
- b. A member asked if there will be a resolution to the U.S. chocolate policy issue. The secretariat explained there are obstacles to changing the definition of chocolate and the Alliance is exploring a variety of options to reduce the trade barrier.
- c. A member asked why the new \$13M U.S. Agency for International Development partnership wasn't captured in the 2016 audit. The secretariat explained that half the amount will be spent directly by members on sustainability work stream projects and this funding won't enter the GSA bank account. The 50% financing from the U.S. Agency for International Development will only be distributed to the secretariat on a quarterly basis over a five-year period.
- d. A member asked why the GSA only trained 5,000 women on quality processing and specifically why there weren't any trainings in Nigeria. The secretariat explained the trainings were funded by a donor project that is now complete. The GSA must find alternative means of training women on quality processing. One option is sustainability partners can provide these trainings as part of their activities.



Upon conclusion of discussion and questions, the president requested members to adopt the annual report.

The 2016 Annual Report was adopted. The approved annual report can be found at this link: [XXX](#).

#### **IV. Review 2013-2016 Modifications to the Guidelines**

The secretariat presented adopted changes to the guidelines that were a result of previous executive committee actions as well as FY11 and FY13 general assembly adopted documents. The modifications included expansion of the executive committee from 7 members to 9 members to include national association representatives from Ghana, Benin, Nigeria, Burkina Faso, Ivory Coast, and Mali, one women's group representative, one international processor representative, and one international brand representative.

#### **V. Proposal New Modifications to the GSA Guidelines**

The secretariat presented proposed changes to the guidelines that would expand the executive committee from 9 members to 11 members including one additional international representative (either brand or processor) and one additional women's group representative.

#### **GSA Guidelines Discussion/Action**

The GSA president explained the current member nominations for 2017-2019 period allowed to add an additional international representative immediately. However, the national associations required more time to select an additional women's group representative. The president requested the changes be adopted by members with the additional international representative to be appointed immediately and the additional women's group representative to be appointed for the 2019-2021 term.

The members adopted the changes to the guidelines and timeline of implementation as suggested by the president.

#### **VI. 2017 - 2019 Executive Committee Elections**

The secretariat distributed the ballot papers and presented the election criteria for the GSA executive committee.

The secretariat received nominations from the following candidates:

Shannon Hess representing The Clorox Company (international brands category)  
Michel Eggen representing IOI Loders Croklaan (international processors category)  
Kasper Torup-Villadsen representing AAK (international processors category)  
Gladys Tawema representing the Benin National Association  
Antoinette Ouedraogo representing the Burkina Faso National Association  
Edwige Gonairi Hammond representing the Ivory Coast National Association  
Prince Obeng Asante representing the Ghana National Association



Badie Marico representing the Mali National Association  
Jibril Usman Bokani representing the Nigeria National Association

All above candidates or representatives presented themselves to the General Assembly and discussed their motivations for joining the executive committee.

There were two candidates for the one available women's group representative. Kora Memounatou from Benin, and Saratu Asuku from Nigeria. The two candidates presented themselves and their motivation to represented women's groups on the GSA executive committee.

The GSA president then requested members vote on the ballots distributed by the secretariat. After the votes were tallied, the results were 176-24 in favor of Mme Kora Memounatou from Benin.

The new Executive Committee members moved to a closed door meeting to appoint the President of the Executive Committee. After 15 minutes, the Executive Committee members announced their selection of Badie Marico as President, Edwige Gonairi Hammond as 1<sup>st</sup> Vice President, and Kasper Torup-Villadsen as 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice President.

#### **IX. Closing Remarks from New EC President**

Newly elected President Marico gave closing remarks to general assembly members. He expressed his thanks to the Mali national association for supporting his candidacy and all the members of the GSA. The meeting was closed at 7:00pm by President Marico.