



2017 Global Shea Alliance Executive Committee Meeting Minutes
July 10th and 11th , 2017
Accra, Ghana
GSA Secretariat Office

July 10th Proposed Agenda

Introductions and GSA Governance

0900 – 0930	Introductions and Review of Agenda
0930 - 1000	Review of GSA Strategic Focus and Current Initiatives
1000 – 1015	KPMG Presentation, EC Roles and Responsibilities
1015 – 1045	EC Discussion of Roles and Responsibilities

1045 – 1115 **Coffee Break**

Presentation of July 2017 – June 2018 Work Plan and Budget (Promotion Activities)

1115 – 1130	African International Conference
1130 – 1145	African Cosmetic Exhibition
1145 – 1215	US Conference

1215 – 1315 **LUNCH**

1315 – 1330	European Conference
1330 – 1400	Research and Regulatory Activities
1400 – 1430	Establish GSA Promotion Working Group

1430 – 1500 **Coffee Break**

Executive Committee Roles and Responsibilities

1500 – 1515	Formation of EC Finance and Audit Subcommittee
1515 – 1530	Formation of EC Membership Subcommittee
1530 – 1545	Formation of Policy Sub Committee
1545 – 1615	Subcommittee Meetings

1800 – 1930 **EC Dinner**

July 11th Proposed Agenda

Presentation of July 2017 – June 2018 Work Plan and Budget (Sustainability Activities)

900 – 930	GSA Sustainability Working Group
930 – 945	USAID Sustainable Shea Initiative - Review
945 – 1015	USAID Sustainable Shea Initiative Activities

1015 – 1045 **Coffee Break**

1045 – 1100 Sustainability Program Development – Donor Fundraising

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1100 – 1115 Sustainability Program Development – Private Sector Engagement
1115 – 1145 Sustainability Program Development Activities – National Strategies

Presentation of July 2017 – June 2018 Work Plan and Budget (Quality Activities)

1145 – 1200 Quality Working Group
1200 – 1215 Administrative and Development
1215 – 1230 Final Review of Work Plan and Budget

1230 – 1330 **LUNCH**

National Association Engagements

1330 – 1415 Burkina Faso and Benin Tax Policy Issues
1415 – 1500 National Association Best Practices
1500 – 1530 Any other business

1530 – 1545 **Closing Remarks**

July 10th Meeting Notes

1. Introductions and Review of the Agenda

Presentation: The meeting was opened by the GSA president at 9:00 am and begin with introductions.

The EC members present:

- Badie Marico, Mali Representative (President)
- Edwige Hammond, Ivory Coast Representative (Vice President)
- Kasper Torup-Villadsen, AAK, Industrial Processor Representative (Vice President)
- Kora Memounata, Women’s Group Representative
- Gladys Tawema, Benin Representative
- Antoinette Ouedrago, Burkina Faso Representative
- Michel Eggen, IOI Loders Croklaan, Industrial Processor Representative
- Jibril Bokani, Nigeria Representative

The members not present due to travel schedules included:

- Shannon Hess, Burt’s Bees, International Brand Representative
- Prince Asante, Ghana Representative

The GSA secretariat staff present:

- Joseph Funt, Managing Director
- Aaron Adu, Director of Africa Operations
- Olawunmi Osholake, Sustainability Director

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- Marie Veyrier, Director of Development
- Doris Darhuso, Finance Director

Discussion/Action: The GSA President requested members to review the agenda. The members requested the following topics under any other business.

- Key staff contract structures and performance reviews
- Presentation by women's group representative on a new health and safety technology
- Discussion of role of EC in secretariat staff management

The agenda was adopted with the inclusion of the above items.

2. Review of GSA Strategic Focus and Current Initiatives

Presentation: The GSA Secretariat presented the key elements of the strategic plan adopted by the general assembly in 2013 including the mission, vision, values, and four strategic focus areas – market expansion, value chain competitiveness, policy advocacy, and sustainability impact.

The secretariat then presented the governance structure including the roles of the general assembly, executive committee, GSA secretariat, working groups and national associations. The GSA guidelines modified in March 2017 were distributed containing these details. It's the secretariat responsibility to raise funds and implement activities that best achieve the GSA strategy. The EC approves the yearly activities and budget to ensure best alignment with the strategy and then oversees the implementation throughout the year.

Discussion/Action: The EC discussed the importance of value chain competitiveness as shea competes globally with other vegetable fats on a variety of aspects including price. They discussed the importance of implementing policies and activities that improve the efficiency of shea production. The EC also requested the top line of the organizational chart read "General Assembly" instead of "Core Members." The EC finally requested copies of position descriptions for key staff in the secretariat. The secretariat will forward the position descriptions following the meeting.

3. Auditor (KPMG) Presentation

Presentation: KMPG presented on the role of the EC finance sub-committee in overseeing the GSA audit and financial management throughout the year. The three main areas of focus for the sub-committee were recommended – risk management, internal audit, and monitoring of external auditors' work.

Discussion/Action: The EC discussed the prospect of conducting an internal audit with a small and specialized staff. The auditors stated the internal audit could be conducted by technical staff or the secretariat can organize an outside consultant.

4. Africa International Conference

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Presentation: The location was determined Abuja, Nigeria by the previous Executive Committee in the March 2017 meeting. The secretariat proposed the theme of “Going Further Together” to reflect the substantial growth in the shea industry and membership as well as the core strength of GSA activities – stakeholder collaboration. The proposed sub themes were Opening New Markets, Reducing Trade Barriers, and Sustainability Collaborations. The secretariat also proposed the dates March 12th and 13th and then small business trainings on the 14th.

Discussion/Action: The EC discussed feedback from participants on the 2017 conference. The participants gave high marks to the technical presentations and requested a larger space and better organization of the registration, meals, and refreshments. One key concern raised was the lack of buyers for shea butter and cosmetics that attended the trade show. As the core strength of the GSA conference is information dissemination and networking amongst participants, the EC discussed the national association organize the trade show as a separate event held in conjunction with the GSA conference. The National Association maybe positioned to organize local buyers of shea products to attend the GSA member booths. The secretariat will organize the shea expo this year but emphasize the booths are to display samples and networking and not to sell products.

The EC members requested clarity of the role of National Associations in raising funds for the conference and profit sharing. The secretariat explained that it signs an agreement with the host country each year and uses a formula to determine profit sharing that was approved by previous executive committee. The secretariat will share the signed agreement with EC members.

The EC members approved the work plan, budget, themes and date for the conference.

5. African Cosmetics Exhibition

Presentation: The secretariat proposed the cosmetics exhibition to be organized at the ProBeauty trade show, Johannesburg in September 2017 and the Dubai Organic and Natural trade show in December 2017. The GSA will sponsor 15 companies to participate in the trade show by publishing a call for proposals and organizing a selection process.

Discussion/Action: The EC discussed the opportunity for GSA to organize its own trade show for shea cosmetics utilizing communication agencies. The EC made a recommendation for the secretariat to explore these opportunities for 2019. The EC approved the work plan activities, proposed trade shows, and associated budget.

6. U.S. Conference

Presentation: The secretariat proposed the U.S. conference to be held in Washington, D.C. on May 14th and organized under the theme “The Next Generation of Products,” to discuss the new opportunities as a results of current GSA research and policy initiatives. The



proposed sub-themes included “improving confectionery,” “new bakery markets,” “understanding value in cosmetics,” and “sustainable sourcing update.”

Discussion/Action: The EC approved the location, date, themes, work plan activities, and associated budget.

7. European Conference

Presentation: The secretariat proposed the European conference be held on April 16th, 2018 in Amsterdam Netherlands aligned with the In-Cosmetics trade show. The proposed theme was “More than an Ingredient” to reflect the important sustainability benefits derived from using shea based ingredients. The sub-themes included “a new way to shea” and “partnering for impact across boundaries.”

Discussion/Action: The EC discussed the growing importance of the Asian food and cosmetics market. The EC requested the secretariat to explore and make a report of opportunities with members, associations, and trade shows to host an Asian conference. The secretariat will add the Asia conference report to the work plan. The EC asked about the selection of representative to attend the U.S. and EU conferences. The secretariat explained that the president or vice-president has represented the EC at such meetings to date but that is a decision for EC members. The EC approved the EU conference date, theme, location, work plan activities, and association budget.

8. Research and Regulatory Activities

Presentation: The secretariat presented the following research and regulatory activities to be performed in the upcoming work plan.

- U.S. Chocolate Advocacy – continue to advocate for citizen petition and engage public and private sectors to include shea in chocolate products in the US.
- U.S. Generally Recognized As Safe (GRAS) Petition – Submit a petition to the U.S. government to request modification to current GRAS regulation to broaden range of shea ingredients in food products.
- Cosmetics Research – Initiate research with a public university to demonstrate benefits of shea in cosmetic products.
- India Chocolate Petition – Continue public and private sector advocacy to include shea butter in the India chocolate regulation.
- China Chocolate Regulation – Obtain approved regulation and disseminate amongst membership.
- Chocolate Consumer Preference Study – Define strategy, products, and geography to explore consumer preference of shea butter in various confectionary products.
- Events/Presentations – Participation in variety of international events to promote shea in food and cosmetics including ChocoVision, Personal Care Products Council, and Cosmetics Europe.



The GRAS and Cosmetics research initiatives are funded by member and general funds contributions.

Discussion/Action: The EC discussed the importance of research on shea tree planting materials and dissemination of best practices on parkland management. The secretariat will review produce and disseminate a best practice document on parkland management during the work plan. The EC also discussed the feasibility of a public awareness campaign for planting and protecting shea trees. The secretariat will also add the costs of the cosmetic research and GRAS initiatives under the general funds category in the budget.

9. Promotion Working Group

Presentation: The secretariat proposed establishing a new member led working group to develop and implement industry and consumer facing marketing activities. The secretariat distributed a proposed terms of reference for the new working group.

Discussion/Action: The EC decided to review the terms of reference in the evening and then discuss the matter under any other business the following day.

10. Formation of EC Finance and Audit Subcommittee

Presentation: The secretariat presented the terms of reference for the subcommittee which includes oversight of the annual audit, quarterly finance, and variance reports produced by the secretariat.

Discussion/Action: The EC determined the following members of the subcommittee:

- Badie Marico – chair
- Kasper Torup Villadsen - member and local signatory
- Michele Eggen – member
- Shannon Hess – member

11. Formation of EC Membership Subcommittee

Presentation: The secretariat presented the terms of reference for the subcommittee including national level representation to expansion membership and ensure communication and participation in GSA activities.

Discussion/Action: The EC determined the following members of the subcommittee:

- Edwige Hammond – chair
- Kora Memounatou- member
- Prince Asante – member
- Jibril Bokani – member

12. Formation of EC Policy Subcommittee

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Presentation: The secretariat presented the terms of reference for the subcommittee including oversight, guidance, and resourcing of secretariat policy projects.

Discussion/Action: The EC determined the following members of the subcommittee:

- Jibril Bokani – chair
- Antoinette Ouedrago - member
- Gladys Tawema – member
- Kasper Torup Villadsen– member

13. Any other business – Staff contract structures and performance evaluations

Presentation: The secretariat explained that staff contracts are for one year terms and are renewed upon the completion of an annual performance evaluation. The GSA managing director and relevant supervisors perform the evaluations and the managing director signs contracts for the secretariat staff. The EC evaluates performance and signs the contract of the managing director.

Discussion/Action: The EC discussed providing longer term contracts for key staff, setting term limits, and a process to evaluate the performance of the managing director.

14. Any other business – EC Roles in Staff Management

Presentation: The secretariat explained the supervisory structure in the GSA secretariat and the levels of authority to address any performance issues or conflicts.

Discussion/Action: The secretariat will revise current human resource policies to better clarify levels of authority and include circumstances under which staff should contact outside governance. The secretariat will also forward the accounting and operations manual for review.

15. Subcommittee meetings

Discussion/Action: The individual subcommittees met to discuss roles, responsibilities, and collaboration with secretariat staff. The president then closed the meetings for the day.

July 11th Meeting Notes

The GSA president convened the meeting at 9am with the same participation as the previous day. Additionally, the advisory board representative Evelyn Ayivor from USAID joined the meeting.

16. Sustainability Working Group

Presentation: The secretariat presented the proposed scope of work for the 2017/18 sustainability working group including a parkland management handbook, community



engagement best practices document, a shea parkland farming model, a livelihood analysis, and monitoring and evaluation of partner activities. The group was proposed to convene in November in Tamale, Ghana, produce the deliverables throughout the year, and make a report to members at the upcoming general assembly. The managing director will serve as secretariat coordinator for the group activities with the support of technical consultants.

Discussion/Action: The EC discussed the necessity of outside consultants to advise working group members on the deliverables. They also discussed the process to select working group participants to provide continuity within the group and also allow new members to contribute their ideas to the development of the sustainability program. The secretariat will post a call for volunteers for the working group and make recommendations to the EC for the composition based on the volunteers. The EC will review and approve the composition of the group.

17. USAID Sustainable Shea Initiative Review

Presentation: The secretariat explained the grant process which includes an open call for proposal to sustainability partners, partner application process, technical evaluations, and a grant award process. To date, the secretariat has finalized 11 collaborations, with 25 sustainability partners in six countries. The members will implement a variety of activities including the construction of 64 warehouses for women shea collectors, providing trainings for 77,000 women shea collectors, and planting of 86,000 seedlings.

Discussion/Action: The EC discussed the importance of more information dissemination of ongoing SSI projects including the availability of shea seedlings in the different countries. The EC also requested more information on NGO partners in the various countries.

18. USAID Sustainable Shea Initiative Workplan Activities

Presentation: The secretariat presented upcoming activities including the development of new collaborations through the grant process, monitoring and evaluation of current grants, and reporting to donors and members on the results.

Discussion/Action: The EC discussed the role of national associations in collaborating with the GSA in implementing the grants. The secretariat and EC members will present the opportunity at country level meetings to ensure national association members are aware of the application process. The GSA will also inform national associations of aggregated activities and results so they can track and monitor progress vis a vis their national level sustainability strategies. The EC approved the workplan activities and associated budgets.

19. Sustainability Program Development – Donor Fundraising

Presentation: The secretariat presented their upcoming activities to raise new donor funds to support the implementation of the GSA sustainability program. The activities included meetings with donors and submissions of proposals in collaboration with members.

Discussion/Action: The EC discussed the role of national associations in collaborating with the GSA to raise new funds to implement the sustainability program. The EC explained there is a substantial opportunity to raise funds in concert with GSA, national associations, national and regional governments, development banks, and donors to implement country wide projects. The secretariat will add a section to the work plan devoted to this activity. The EC approved the donor fundraising activities and associated budget.

20. Sustainability Program Development – Private Sector Engagement

Presentation: The secretariat presented activities to engage new private sector stakeholders to join the GSA as members and sustainability partners. The activities include participation in international events and individual meetings throughout the year.

Discussion/Action: The EC approved the workplan and budget for private sector engagement.

21. Sustainability Program Development – National Strategies

Presentation: The secretariat presented activities to convene national association, donors, governments, and GSA members to develop national sustainability strategies in Nigeria, Ivory Coast, Ghana, Togo, and Mali.

Discussion/Action: The EC discussed the exclusion of Burkina Faso and Benin from the list. The secretariat explained this was because these meetings were recently held in the countries. The Burkina member discussed the importance of completing the strategy document initiated at the meeting. The Nigeria representative discussed the importance of conducting the strategy meeting in concert with conference preparation activities. The EC approved the workplan activities and associated budget.

22. Quality Working Group

Presentation: The secretariat proposed the scope of work for the quality working group including the development of a standard and recommended best practice for production of shea butter. The group would meet in Ghana, conduct their activities throughout the year and present the results at the general assembly.

Discussion/Action: The EC discussed recent findings of mineral oil contamination in shea butter samples that are causing challenges in global food markets. The mineral oil can enter supply chains through the utilization of jute sacks that can contain traces of mineral oil or through certain factory processes that may expose shea butter to mineral oil. The secretariat will release communication describing the challenge and recommended actions. Even though jute sacks can cause contamination, it was recommended that the GSA not promote the use of PP bags industry wide due to other quality concerns with that material. The EC approved the scope of work, activities, and associated budget for quality working group.

23. Administration and Reporting

Presentation: The secretariat presented the proposed financial and technical reporting during the workplan so EC perform their governance responsibilities. The secretariat proposed the following reports:

- Quarterly technical report on execution of work plan activities
- Quarterly financial report of income and expenses
- Quarterly variance report of expenses vs approved budget
- Quarterly update to policy subcommittee
- Quarterly update to quality subcommittee
- Quarterly update to membership subcommittee

Discussion/Action: The EC approved the proposed reporting structure.

24. Final Approval of Work Plan and Budget

Discussion/Action: The EC approved the workplan and budget with the changes recommended over the two days. The secretariat should begin implementation immediately and forward the revised budget and workplan along with the meeting notes.

25. Burkina Faso and Benin Tax Policy Issues

Presentation: The secretariat presented description of new taxes on shea exports. In Benin, a uniform tax on the export of all agricultural raw materials was recently introduced by the government. The tax affects shea exports and is due to take effect this trading season. In Burkina Faso, the National Association was recently named an official body by the government that has authority to collect taxes to support the sustainability. No taxes have been finalized to date in the Burkina Faso although there are current recommendations.

Discussion/Action: The EC discussed government motivation for the new taxes including to increase government revenues, encourage local value addition, and raise funds for sustainability initiatives. The EC discussed how export taxes raise the cost of production and makes shea less competitive in global food and cosmetic markets. The increased cost of production can create an underlying threat to the sustainability of shea markets. Additionally, there is likelihood that exporters will scale back purchasing in countries with export taxes that will result in less competition at the farm gate level and lower prices for women shea collectors. The Burkina Faso representative stressed that no taxes have been approved and any decisions will be taken through dialogue with exporters. Other EC members expressed concern about export taxes in Mali and Ivory Coast. All members agreed the GSA should work with national associations for the removal and reduction of these taxes by taking the following actions:

- The secretariat will draft talking points, supporting data, and a draft advocacy letter to be submitted to the EC for review.

- The EC members will co-sign the letter demonstrating support from national associations and exporters on the topic.
- The GSA secretariat will organize the country level efforts with national associations to distribute the letter and advocate for the removal of export taxes.
- The Mali representative recommended the advocacy efforts take place during the upcoming “shea exchange” in his country.

26. National Association Best Practices

Presentation: The secretariat presented current challenges to working with national associations including minimal representation of national stakeholders, lack of consultation with different stakeholder groups, minimal transparency of work plans or communication of ongoing activities, lack of transparency of process to elect officials, and lack of proper segregation of duties between secretariat staff and elected officials.

Discussion/Action: The EC discussed the challenge of underfunding of national associations and the lack of functioning secretariats to resolve the challenges. They requested fundraising support from GSA. The secretariat will produce policies and procedures that will be distributed to the EC and national associations to promote best practices. The EC also recommended that national associations have an opportunity to present their activities during the Africa international conference each year.

27. Any Other Business – Women’s Health and Safety Technology

Presentation: The women’s group representative presented the pilot of a new technology known as “shea roller” that can improve the working conditions of women shea collectors. She shared a video and described the various benefits to women collectors including the mitigation of snake bites.

Discussion/Action: The EC discussed an update on the women’s group representative budget that was approved in the previous EC meeting. The secretariat explained they are sponsoring several women’s groups representatives to attend working groups, conference, and trade shows throughout the year. The secretariat will work with the women’s group representative to draft an SSI application around the new technology during the work plan.

28. Any Other Business – Promotion Working Group

Discussion/Action: The EC discussed the terms of reference presented at the previous day’s meeting. They approved the formation of the working group and requested the secretariat to solicit volunteers. The secretariat will post a call for volunteers, compile a suggested member composition for the group, and forward for the EC approval.

29. Any Other Business – Handcrafted Shea Butter

Discussion/Action: The EC discussed concerns of certain GSA members developing standards for shea butter and undertaking promotion activities outside of GSA working



groups and without EC or general assembly input. The EC requested the secretariat to contact those members and encourage them to work through formal GSA channels.

30. Closing Remarks

Discussion/Action: The president thanked the various members for their participation over the last two days and looks forward to collaborating with the EC and secretariat over the course of the next year.