

## Reviving Shea Parklands through Farmer Managed Natural Regeneration

Between July and September 2025, the Global Shea Alliance (GSA), with support from the African Development Bank through the Africa Climate Change Fund, achieved an important milestone in the regional project *Towards Climate Resilient Shea Communities in Togo and Burkina Faso*. Women's co-operatives in both countries were trained in Farmer Managed Natural Regeneration (FMNR), a simple yet powerful approach to restoring degraded shea parklands.

FMNR builds on the natural ability of trees to regenerate from existing roots and stumps. Rather than planting new trees, shea tree custodians protect and manage shoots already present in their fields, pruning and guiding them to maturity. This low cost, climate smart method enriches biodiversity, restores soil fertility and strengthens the resilience of farming communities.



In Burkina Faso, eight women's shea co-operatives participated in highly interactive training combining theory and field practice. Participants learned to identify viable shea shoots, apply selective pruning and create firebreaks and protective measures against livestock and drought. Even where young shea trees were absent, women practised techniques on alternative species, sparking discussions about the urgent need to restore aging and depleted parklands. Over 600 shoots were directly managed during the

sessions, with women pledging to transfer their knowledge across their communities. *"We realised that with our own hands and knowledge we can bring life back to our parklands,"* said Traoré Gnima, Nousseoudia Co-operative, Burkina Faso.

In Togo, seven co-operatives engaged in similar training. Beyond pruning and shoot management, women explored complementary practices such as mulching, water retention pits and protective fencing using local materials. Co-operative leaders highlighted the potential of FMNR to ensure a sustainable supply of shea kernels whilst improving food security through healthier soils and diversified tree cover. *"FMNR is more than a technique, it is a way to secure both our livelihoods and the future of our children,"* explained Tchable Kiyome from Lampouuini Women's Co-operative, Togo. The training also reinforced women's leadership in resource management and strengthened community level structures for monitoring and protection.





The enthusiasm of participants in both countries demonstrated the value of FMNR as a solution grounded in nature and rooted in local knowledge. *“This training has given us the confidence to teach others in our villages. By restoring trees, we are restoring hope,”* said Traoré Gnima, Noussondia Co-operative, Burkina Faso. Scaling up these practices is helping to revive shea trees whilst empowering women as key actors in climate adaptation and shea parkland restoration.

The GSA remains committed to expanding FMNR across shea growing communities, building landscapes that are productive, resilient and sustainable for generations to come.