

Empowering Women, Transforming Shea: Two Years of Impact in Ghana and Côte d'Ivoire

The **Global Shea Alliance (GSA)**, in partnership with **Invest for Jobs**, an initiative of the **German Co-operation** and implemented by the **Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH**, is nearing the conclusion of a transformative 2 year journey through the **Shea Investment and Jobs Creation Program**. More than a production initiative, SHIP represented a comprehensive effort to strengthen, build skills, create jobs and connect producers to markets. Through this program, **25 new women's co-operatives** were established and **20 existing ones revitalised**. Transitioning from informal groups to structured organisations has given women stronger negotiating power, improved access to buyers and greater ability to pool resources. Over **13,000 women** in both Ghana and Côte d'Ivoire received technical training in processing, quality standards and business management, enhancing their expertise and ensuring that their products meet international market requirements.



Recognising the importance of social protection, SHIP also supported a mechanism. **2,250 women shea processors** in accessing health insurance and social welfare programs. These measures have strengthened women's ability to sustain their livelihoods with greater security and confidence.

A defining feature of SHIP was its focus on **sustainable job creation through value addition**.

By shifting women's roles from seasonal kernel collectors to skilled processors of shea

butter, the program created year round employment opportunities. This transition not only improved the quality and marketability of shea products but also provided more stable sources of income, contributing to the economic resilience of entire communities.





The program also mobilised **€690,743 in private sector investment**, a key driver of its success. This funding enabled the purchase of essential processing machinery, such as kneaders, grinding mills, shea kernel roasters and crushers, modernising production capacities and improving efficiency. With upgraded equipment and facilities, co-operatives are now more self reliant and competitive in both local and international markets.

The results speak for themselves: it is anticipated that **more than 2,000 new jobs** have been created, community organisations have been strengthened and the shea industry has become more resilient in both Ghana and

Côte d'Ivoire. These outcomes highlight the program's tangible contribution to local economies and to women's economic empowerment.

The SHIP program stands as a powerful example of **inclusive and sustainable growth**. By equipping women with skills, resources and market access they need, it has not only transformed individual lives but also reinforced the entire shea value chain. This is not the end of the journey, it is the beginning of a new chapter for the industry, one where **women's leadership and sustainable practices** continue to drive lasting prosperity across West Africa.