



Global Shea Alliance



GSA News Update

the official newsletter of the Global Shea Alliance

Registration Now Open: Shea 2014



The Global Shea Alliance is pleased to announce the 7th annual international shea conference, **Shea 2014: The Industry Unites** to be held in Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire from 24th-26th March with an optional field trip in Abidjan on March 27th.

During this year's conference, Global Shea Alliance members will take a substantial step forward and establish quality and sustainability standards as well as collaborative projects that address key challenges and opportunities in women's empowerment, quality, and tree conservation. The event is a critical opportunity for current and prospective members to determine your role and membership benefits for years to come.

Working groups on sustainability & quality address shea industry's primary issues



Sustainability and quality – the two issues are arguably the most important affecting shea today. At the 2013 annual shea conference, members of the Global Shea Alliance established working groups on each and the groups are forging ahead.

"We may be manufacturing different products for different uses," said Roland Riboux, CEO of Fludor, an oil processing company in Benin. "But we all face similar challenges –

whether we are buying shea nuts, processing shea nuts or making products for sale to food companies or high-end cosmetic boutiques."

The working groups reflect the industry's broad reach – both include members from around the world and from some of the world's best known companies: The Hershey Company, IOI Loders Croklaan, Burt's Bees, and The Body Shop are a few of the members of the sustainability



committee while IOI Loders Croklaan, AAK, and Sekaf Ghana Ltd are participating in the working group on quality.

The quality working group is refining a set of shea nut kernel quality standards for members to use throughout the industry. A draft was presented at last year's international conference in Abuja, Nigeria. The standards are meant to be simple and usable during daily trading. Shea nut quality is directly related to the quantity and quality of the fat extracted from shea nuts, and buyers are willing to pay more for higher quality nuts.

Ensuring shea's sustainability has implications for all stakeholders. For the millions of women who collect shea, sustainability is reflected in the prices they obtain for the shea nuts they collect and shea butter they sell. For buyers, sustainability is about ensuring the continued supplies of shea at prices the

market can bear.

The sustainability working group is tasked with setting the industry standard for sustainable shea. The working group will propose a set of practices that members of the Global Shea Alliance can adopt.

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And, not least, sustainability of shea trees must be taken into consideration.

“The current trees are old and under threat, for example from bush fires, harvesting for charcoal, and mining,” said Isaahu Zakaria of SNV Ghana, the Dutch development agency. “In order to conserve the shea tree as a local natural resource, the economic utility of shea must ‘compete’ with the short-term alternative cash value of the tree.”

Pins Brown of Ergon Associates, a specialty consultancy firm based in the UK, is facilitating the sustainability working group. With experience in more than 30 countries, Ergon has expertise in a wide variety of backgrounds including ethical trade, human rights, and gender. The firm has advised other multistakeholder initiatives including Ethical Trade Initiative and Better Cotton Initiative. You can learn more at www.ergononline.net.

Emmanuel Adjei of Ghana will be the facilitator of the quality working group. Mr. Adjei is a Business Development Consultant and a Project Manager with over 20 years of experience. He has managed a quality standards and norms inspections program for horticultural exports which ensured that fresh produce being exported by sea from Ghana were inspected before departure.

Quality working group

Name	Organization	Country	Stakeholder Category
Gilles Adamon	Natura Sarl	Benin	Brand
Eric Banye	SNV	Ghana	Non profit
Sara Diony	Sido	Mali	Women's Group
Maxwell Edusei	Earth Tone	Ghana	Supplier
Senyo Kpelly	SeKaf Ghana Ltd	Ghana	Brand
George Noye	AAK	Sweden	Supplier
Seyi Oshikanlu	Olory Shea	Nigeria	Women's Group
Antoine Turpin	IOI Loders Croklaan	Ghana	Supplier
Ruth Wallace	Technoserve	Ghana	Non profit

Sustainability working group

Name	Organization	Country	Stakeholder Category
Anna Perinic	Star Shea	Ghana	Supplier/Non Profit
Aminata Niang	SOS SAHEL	Senegal	Non profit
Christopher Bakaweri	SNV	Ghana	Non profit
Antoine Turpin	IOI Loders Croklaan	Ghana	Supplier
Mark Davis	The Body Shop (part of L'Oreal Group)	UK	Brand
Ray Major	The Hershey Company	USA	Brand
Shannon Hess	The Clorox Company (Burt's Bees)	USA	Brand
Sean Hall	Sundial Brands (Shea Moisture)	USA	Brand
Safia Alhassan	Africa 2000	Ghana	Women's Group
Antoinette Ouedraogo	REKAF	Burkina Faso	Women's Group
Aaron Ampofo	Rainforest Alliance	USA	Certification
Funlayo Alabi	Shea Radiance	USA	Brand
Daniele Grace Warren	Just Shea	USA	Non Profit
Natasha Johnson	Sidley Austin LLP	USA	Legal
Dennis Garrity	World Agroforestry Center (ICRAF)	Kenya	Research/Expert Consultation

GSA Trains Over 12,000 Women on the Best Practices for Quality Shea Nuts

The Global Shea Alliance empowers women shea nut collectors by promoting best practices in collection and processing each year. This year's quality training has just wrapped up, benefitting over 12,000 women shea nut collectors in 200 villages in West Africa, representing an increase of 7,000 participants from 2012. The Alliance delivered trainings in villages and disseminated radio advertisements in collaboration with the National Shea Associations in Ghana, Benin, Cote d'Ivoire, and Burkina Faso to demonstrate the best practices of shea nut collecting.

The extensive quality training, carried out in the field by trainers armed with industry reviewed best practices, presented each step of obtaining better nut quality, covering methods of collection, processing, and storage. These trainings benefit women collectors through improving the value of their shea nuts for sale and increasing their access to international markets.

“The response to the quality training programs was tremendous in Ghana,” said Eugenia Akuete of Nasaakle Ltd, past-president of the Alliance. “Once the word got out, every training workshop was packed.”

The quality of a shea nut determines the amount of butter that can be obtained from the nut, which can vary as much as 40%. For



companies, this means that they can offer the women higher prices for better quality nuts. The higher quality nuts also increase the value of nuts sold in local markets, because it improves the yield and efficiency of processing handcrafted butter.

As part of the quality campaign, the Alliance is facilitating market linkages between international buyers and some of the women's groups, based on the improved quality of the nuts.



Alliance's inaugural event in North America brings shea stakeholders to New York City

More than 75 shea industry stakeholders, including representatives of [The Body Shop](#), [AAK](#), [The Hershey Company](#), [Jergens](#), and [Shea Radiance](#), participated in the Global Shea Alliance's inaugural North American event in May. The conference, held in New York City, featured presentations and discussion of the primary issues affecting shea across Africa.

"Our primary goal was to introduce the Alliance to stakeholders in the U.S.," said Antoine Turpin of [IOI Lodgers Crokiaan](#), a member of the Alliance's executive committee. "We know sustainability is important to them and we wanted them to know that that is the Alliance's top concern – and it needs their support."

Shortly after the event, the Alliance welcomed Hershey's to the Alliance. Burt's Bees – an internationally recognized personal care products brand that sells its products in more than 30,000 retail outlets – also joined in June as has [Sundial Brands](#), the makers of Shea Moisture.

"We're very excited about the alliance and support the alliance's mission," said Raymond Mayor, senior manager of sustainability initiatives at Hershey's, makers of some of the most popular chocolate candy bars in the U.S.

"This event was really important because it was another opportunity to get together with other stakeholders in the industry to



find out how to keep shea sustainable," said Funlayo Alabi of Shea Radiance. "My passion is not only using shea as an ingredient in my products – my customers care very deeply about what happens to the women who are the caretakers of shea. And this meeting was fantastic because it looks like everyone is on the same page in terms of making sure that the benefit goes back to the women."

Her view was shared by the personal care director at AAK in North America. AAK is the world's largest buyer of sheanuts.

"I think it's fantastic where people can share information about shea industry its benefits and functions and different applications," said John O'Keefe of AAK. "And also (consider) the needs of the industry to develop these applications in the proper way so that the economic and social development of the West African region continues to prosper, and continues to get much better environmental impact and much better economic impact."

Panel at WTO event presents shea to "aid for trade" stakeholders

Alliance members [Ghana Nuts](#), [StarShea Ltd](#), [SAP](#), and the GSA secretariat presented on a special panel at the World Trade Organization's "Aid for Trade" conference in Geneva in July. Moderated by USAID's assistant administrator, the presenters discussed the Alliance's strategy, activities, and innovative approaches in the supply chain.

The panel was sponsored by the U.S. Government as a side event during the WTO's 4th Review of Aid for Trade. Panel members discussed how USAID, through its catalyzing role in the creation of both the African Cashew Alliance (ACA) and the Global Shea Alliance (GSA), is connecting these two value chains to global end markets and helping the private sector add value or "upgrade" in developing countries. Eric Postel, USAID Assistant Administrator for the Bureau for Economic Growth, Education and Environment, led the panel and discussion which offered insights into the role donors, governments, and the private sector can play



in bringing together a wide range of African and international stakeholders, all whom have an interest in creating competitive

industries, linked to global markets and providing economic growth opportunities for all involved.

Shea 2013: Global Perspectives



More than 500 representatives of all points in the shea value chain participated in the Global Shea Alliance's "Global Perspectives" 2013 annual conference, in Abuja, Nigeria, in March, and set the course for the future of an industry whose global significance grows with every year. Alliance members set up working groups on sustainability on the critical issues of quality and sustainability, and elected a new president.

More than 16 million women derive benefit from shea – and about 4 million do so from exports. Shea exports have grown rapidly over the last 10 years, and, recognizing that women's livelihoods and the industry's sustainability face a variety of issues, stakeholders formed the Alliance in 2010. At the 2013 conference, major exporters, women's groups, NGOs, development agencies, commercial banks, investment funds, shea product exporters and international brands – among others – interacted at what was Africa's largest ever shea event.

The conference was made possible by contributions from more than 25 sponsors from around the world.

Outgoing President Eugenia Akuete, at the end of her two-year term, reminded participants that the shea industry held its first ever conference seven years ago in Abuja in 2006, and noted with pride how far the Alliance has come.

"You are seeing the results of our important and historic decision to launch the Global Shea Alliance – a decision that above all else was remarkable because it involved every major stakeholder in the industry," Akuete said. "That says a great deal – mainly that we all agree that we cannot resolve the issues working alone. There is no question about it: we must collaborate."

At the conference the Alliance held its Annual General Meeting to establish the next steps to be taken to secure the continued growth of the industry. Market expansion is imperative if the industry is to thrive.

"As well as moving into new local and international markets where shea is not commonly sold, market diversification is crucial," said the Alliance's Managing Director Joseph Funt. "There are many markets

where shea products can penetrate far more deeply, like cosmetics, pharmaceuticals, and other edible industries where shea can act as a key sustainable ingredient or substitute."

For the long-term growth of the industry, sustainability is key. The conference heard expert analyses of the environmental and human threats facing shea trees across the region, and outlines of successful initiatives to combat these threats. Issahaku Zakaria of SNV Ghana described the growth of a sustainability protocol for communities in northern Ghana.

"The current trees are old and under threat, for example from bush fires, harvesting for charcoal, and mining," Zakaria said. "In order to conserve the shea tree as a local natural resource, the economic utility of shea must 'compete' with the short-term alternative cash value of the tree."

To this end, community bio-cultural protocols have been adopted, as well as the introduction of beekeeping as an alternative form of income. The General Meeting formed a Sustainability Working Group, with a view to developing a base code for sustainability, and lobbying national organizations to support it.

Academic specialists such as Dr. Georgina Durst-Lahti of Beloit College in the U.S. described how internationally-recognized, scientifically-demonstrable quality standards can make international sales much easier to achieve.

"U.S. and EU buyers want 'paper' even before they want a sample," said Durst-Lahti. She went on to note the importance of authentic stories of shea's social benefit as a marketing tool, but emphasized that this factor only comes into play once the quality of the product has been guaranteed.

"The future of shea has never been brighter," said Funt, the Alliance's director. "Shea has been an economic and social force across Africa for millennia, and now the continent's stakeholders are in a position to begin reaping the full benefits."

On the final day of the conference, participants travelled to Niger state - the largest state in Nigeria and the location of most of the country's shea trees – to see Kodo Village, a shea-producing center run by a women's cooperative. An initiative supported by Niger State government, Kodo Village is an example of how rural women can take control of the manufacture of shea butter, with harvesting centered on a processing facility within the village itself, ensuring that as much as possible of the value-addition process remains in the local community.

The conference was co-hosted by Niger State Government and partnered by Better Life Program for the African Rural Woman and USAID West Africa Trade Hub. The USAID Business Environments for Agile Markets (BEAM) also provided support.



From left to right, Hajiji Salima Makama, new president of the Global Shea Alliance; Eugenia Akuete, outgoing GSA president; and, Hajiji Aisha Babangida, director of Better Life for Rural Women, a non-governmental organization.





New members bring experience, expertise to Alliance

The Global Shea Alliance is pleased to announce that Hershey's, Burt's Bees and Sundial Brands have joined the Alliance, bringing decades of experience, business acumen and commitment to the Alliance's goal to empower millions of women who work in shea.

"These world class companies recognize that women's empowerment is critical to the success of the shea industry – and members around the world join me in welcoming them to the Alliance," said Global Shea Alliance President Salima Makama.

Hershey's membership is notable because it is the first major food company to join the Alliance – and the largest maker of chocolate in North America. Hershey's Milk Chocolate Bar is an American icon. The company uses shea-based ingredients in the making of a few of its products.

"Joining the Alliance fits with Hershey's long commitment to supporting communities in Africa where ingredients for our products

are grown," said Ray Major of Hershey's. "A sustainable shea supply chain is a win-win: it is critical to the livelihoods of millions of women in Africa and it is important to our business."

The personal care products of Burt's Bees, which is owned by the Clorox Company, operates under a business model referred to as "The Greater Good," which outlines that all company practices must be socially responsible. The company uses all natural ingredients, engages in environmentally friendly business practices, and extends its humanitarian efforts to the community at large.

"When it comes to sourcing, The Greater Good™ means that we are inspired by nature--our most vital supply chain partner. We are dedicated to respecting the communities, the individuals, and the environment from which we source. Trust and transparency are absolutely essential for implementing our approach to responsible sourcing. We are honoured to join the

Global Shea Alliance and help realize our shared vision for a sustainable supply chain," said Shannon Hess, Senior Manager of Responsible Sourcing & Sustainability at The Clorox Company.

Sundial Brands is the maker of Shea Moisture, a popular personal care product sold in the U.S. available in CVS, Duane Reade, Target, Walgreens and Whole Foods stores. Sundial Brands makes the highest quality natural skin care products, engaging in eco-friendly and cruelty-free business practices, and supporting local communities and fair trade around the world. .

The new members are also joining the Global Shea Alliance's Sustainability Working Group, which will establish a base code and implementation principles that will be presented to the general membership for approval at the 2014 annual conference.



The GSA's first North American conference in New York City

Promotion

Global Shea Alliance Featured in Recent Media

The latest issue of Cosmopolitan magazine featured shea as a beauty product. Pictured with GSA president, Hajiya Salima Makama, the article's author, Jessica Matlin, explains to readers the social and health benefits of using shea in cosmetics.

"Known to some as women's gold, shea creates jobs and income for villages," wrote Ms. Matlin. "Since shea is absurdly rich in the fatty acids found in your own skin, it gives your body a supernatural sheen and your face a healthy, dewy radiance—the kind we often rely on cosmetics for."

"After Fair Trade Coffee, Fair Trade Shea" (Frankie Edozien), published by The International Herald Tribune and the New York Times, promoted the Shea Butter Trade Industry conference held by the Global Shea Alliance in New York.

Executive committee members Hajiya Salima Makama, Antoine Turpin, and Mark Davis were quoted in the article in support of sustainable shea as a way to benefit women, and the food and cosmetic industries.

How We Made it in Africa: Insight into Business in Africa also promoted the Shea Butter Trade Industry conference with their article, [Shea butter nourishes opportunities for African women](#). The author, Rebecca Moudio, describes the emerging shea market, pointing to opportunities in both the cosmetic and confectionery sectors, "With the demand for natural and organic products rising in the Western world, shea butter has become a hot commodity."

Confectionery News published an article featuring the Global Shea Alliance and shea's role as a cocoa butter equivalent. Their article, [Cocoa butter equivalent demand rising rapidly, says Global Shea Alliance](#) by Oliver Nieburg, described the growth of shea's use as a CBE.

Referencing the Global Shea Alliance, Confectionery News tells readers that "confectioners are increasingly replacing



cocoa butter with CBEs derived from a mix of shea stearin and palm mid fraction, due to reduced cost, functionality and improved sustainability". The article also mentions the change in EU labeling requirements in December 2014.

NASDAQ interviewed the CEO of AAK, Arne Frank, as part of the NASDAQ CEO Signature Series. AAK is the largest exporter of shea nuts and lead-firm in the confectionery industry. The interview highlights the investment potential in the shea industry. [You can download the interview here.](#)

Alliance audit confirms sound financial management

The GSA completed its first independent financial audit for the 2012 tax year. The selected auditor, Deloitte, wrote "In our opinion, the project has kept proper accounting records and the financial statements are in agreement with the records in all material respects." The audit report will be filed with the appropriate authorities.



Dates for the

Month	Event
October	
26	Benin National Association General Assembly
November	
4-5	GSA Sustainability Working Group meeting, Accra, Ghana
23	Cosmetics Formulation Training, Nigeria
27	Stakeholder's Meeting for the GSA Business Sector Advocacy Challenge Fund Grant
27-30	Ghana National Association General Assembly
January 2014	
22-23	Sustainable Foods Summit, San Francisco
March	
24-26	Shea 2014

Please contact the Global Shea Alliance for further details: info@globalshea.com

New 3-year Partnership with ICCO

The Global Shea Alliance established a three-year partnership with ICCO, a Dutch development cooperation working to reduce poverty and injustice in the world. The new project will develop and strengthen shea national associations in Benin, Ghana, and Mali and also administer large scale quality campaigns in each country.

The three year project will benefit more than 40,000 rural women collectors through trainings in shea processing best practices and ongoing market linkages to buyers. The President of the Global Shea Alliance, Hajiya Salima Makama stated, "We are excited to partner with ICCO on a major project that will benefit so many of our rural women stakeholders."

Global Shea Alliance

