

**Call for Proposals**  
**Shea Business Empowerment Program (SBEP) II**  
**Establishment of Community Shea and Indigenous Tree Nurseries**

**1. Background**

The Global Shea Alliance (GSA), in partnership with the Mastercard Foundation, is implementing a five-year program in collaboration with the International Trade Centre, Light for the World, and EmpowHer. This initiative builds on the success of the Shea Business Empowerment Pilot Program in Ghana and seeks to expand its impact by connecting financially disadvantaged young women across West Africa to dignified employment opportunities within the shea value chain.

The program is designed to strengthen the entrepreneurial capacity and climate resilience of young women engaged in shea production. Phase I will focus on Benin and Ghana, while Phase II will extend to Nigeria, Senegal, and Burkina Faso.

Overall, the initiative aims to create dignified and sustainable work opportunities for 374,865 financially disadvantaged young women—including persons with disabilities (PWDs) and internally displaced persons (IDPs) across the targeted countries. This will be achieved through the strengthening of businesses along the shea value chain, from primary processing cooperatives to higher-value addition enterprises.

**The implementation of the program is guided by four core objectives:**

- Increase productivity in shea collection and primary processing
- Empower women-led enterprises engaged in secondary and tertiary value addition
- Strengthen market linkages among shea cooperatives, SMEs, and private sector actors
- Advocate for national policies that support the preservation and sustainable management of shea parklands

Under Outcome 3: Climate-smart enterprises established to enhance the resilience of shea-producing landscapes, **the program will support the establishment of 80 community nurseries over a five-year period.** These nurseries will produce shea and other indigenous tree seedlings to support restoration activities across targeted shea parklands.

These nurseries will serve as community-based enterprises operated primarily by women cooperatives composed of financially disadvantaged young women. The initiative is expected to create sustainable income streams, enhance local restoration efforts, and strengthen the long-term resilience of shea-producing communities.

To support the implementation of this intervention in Year One, the Global Shea Alliance (GSA) is inviting qualified members and Sustainability Partners in Ghana with demonstrated experience in community mobilization, climate-smart agriculture, restoration, and cooperative development to submit proposals for the establishment and operationalization of six community nurseries within selected shea landscapes. Each nursery will directly engage and empower 66 women through nursery establishment, seedling production, and restoration-related livelihood activities aimed at strengthening both environmental sustainability and community resilience.

Selected partners will be responsible for identifying target rural communities and supporting **young women aged 18–35** to establish and manage fully youth-led community-based shea and indigenous tree nurseries to provide dignified employment opportunities to financially disadvantaged young

women within shea-producing communities in alignment with the program's broader objectives on value addition and enterprise development.

Interested applicants are required to download, complete, and submit the application form in accordance with the provided guidelines.

## **2. Objective of the Call**

The objective of this call is to identify and engage qualified partners to support the establishment and management of community-based shea and indigenous tree nurseries operated by financially disadvantaged young women within shea-producing communities.

The intervention seeks to:

- Enhance climate resilience through restoration of degraded shea landscapes;
- Create dignified green employment opportunities for young women;
- Develop sustainable nursery enterprises capable of supplying quality seedlings to restoration initiatives;
- Build local technical capacity in nursery management and grafting techniques;
- Strengthen women-led cooperatives engaged in climate-smart enterprises.

## **3. Scope of Support**

The Program will support selected partners to establish and operationalize community nurseries that will produce shea and indigenous tree seedlings for landscape restoration initiatives.

Support will include:

- Technical training in nursery establishment and management;
- Training in shea grafting techniques and indigenous tree propagation;
- Provision of nursery-related equipment and materials;
- Development and adaptation of technical training curricula;
- Facilitation of market and restoration linkages for seedling sales;
- Monitoring and technical backstopping of nursery operations.

## **4. Roles and Responsibilities of Parties**

### **a. GSA Member & Sustainability Partner**

Selected partners will be responsible for the following:

- i. Identify suitable target communities and mobilize financially disadvantaged young women aged 18–35.
- ii. Facilitate stakeholder engagement and community entry processes.
- iii. Organize participants into nursery management cooperatives or groups.
- iv. Identify suitable land and water sources for nursery establishment.
- v. Organize participating young women into groups ensuring inclusion targets of at least 5% persons with disabilities (PWDs) and 5% internally displaced persons (IDPs).
- vi. Conduct training needs assessments.
- vii. Support nursery establishment and management.
- viii. Deliver practical training on nursery management, grafting, restoration, cooperative governance, and enterprise management.
- ix. Facilitate market and restoration linkages.

- x. Ensure environmentally sustainable nursery operations.

#### **b. Global Shea Alliance (GSA)**

As part of its support to young women-led cooperatives, GSA will:

- i. Provide technical guidance and oversight.
- ii. Develop and share training curricula.
- iii. Provide funding support for nursery establishment and training.
- iv. Facilitate collaboration with research institutions.
- v. Support monitoring, evaluation, and impact tracking.
- vi. Facilitate partnerships and market linkages.
- vii. Deploy young graduates to undertake business internships and coaching with the established young women led nurseries.
- viii. Monitor, track, and evaluate systemic changes and the overall impact of the intervention on cooperatives and their communities.

### **5. Eligibility Criteria**

Interested applicants must meet the following criteria to be considered:

- Be a registered and paid up GSA member and recognized Sustainability Partner.
- Demonstrate proven experience in mobilizing and engaging young women, particularly in hard-to-reach rural communities.
- Possess the capacity to identify suitable communities with accessible or leasable land for nursery establishment and related activities.
- Demonstrate the ability to effectively engage community leaders and women's groups to secure land documentation and facilitate lease agreements where necessary.
- Have experience in climate-smart agriculture, restoration, agroforestry, or nursery management
- Demonstrate capacity to work with financially disadvantaged young women in rural communities;
- Possess operational capacity to work in hard-to-reach communities;
- Demonstrate sound financial and project management systems.

### **6. Application Criteria**

Applications will be assessed based on the following:

- Compliance with eligibility requirements
- Technical understanding of nursery establishment and restoration;
- Experience in women's economic empowerment
- Potential for social impact, particularly for disadvantaged young women
- Consideration of environmental sustainability
- Geographic inclusion, with priority given to underserved areas
- Geographic relevance and community access
- Environmental sustainability considerations
- Successful completion of due diligence assessments

## 6. Partner On-boarding Process

The process for engaging GSA Members and Sustainability Partners is outlined below:

- Publication of the Request for Proposals (RFP)
- Virtual information dissemination session on 20th May 2026 at 2 pm GMT ([meeting link](#))
- Close of application submission ([SBEP II RFP Nursery Application](#))
- Initial review of applications
- Due diligence process (including desk reviews, in-person visits, and / or phone interviews)
- Final review and selection of partners
- Issuance of selection confirmation emails to successful partners
- On-boarding webinar for selected partners
- Contracting and agreement execution

## 7. Expected Deliverables

Selected partners will be expected to deliver:

- Functional community nurseries established within assigned restoration zones;
- Organized and trained women-led nursery cooperatives
- Production of quality shea and indigenous seedlings
- Business and sustainability plans for nurseries
- Monitoring and progress reports
- Linkages with restoration initiatives and seedling buyers

## 8. How to Apply

In Ghana, interested applicants are required to complete and submit the SBEP II Application Form to the GSA Secretariat by May **28, 2026**, at 5pm GMT. Applications should be addressed to **Prince Nunoo, Senior Programs Manager (Projects)** and submitted via email at [p.nunoo@globalshea.com](mailto:p.nunoo@globalshea.com) and copy **Edwin Zuta, Partnership Manager**; [e.zuta@globalshea.com](mailto:e.zuta@globalshea.com)