

Global Shea Alliance, USAID partner for industry growth and sustainability

WASHINGTON D.C., USA - The Global Shea Alliance (GSA) and the US Agency for International Development (USAID), have signed a US \$13 million, five-year agreement to promote shea markets worldwide and improve sustainable production in Africa.



Shea fruit and by-products. Image by 123RF

“The shea industry is changing and companies, governments, and donors are investing more in sustainable production and improving the benefit to 16,000,000 women collectors and processors,” said Moumouni Konate, president of the Global Shea Alliance.

“The goal of this critical partnership is to help women collectors and processors organise into cooperatives, obtain equipment and training, and improve the financial benefit from the sale of their products. Stronger women’s groups will process more shea, improve quality, and protect the trees.”

During the Global Shea Alliance’s annual conference in Accra, Ghana, USAID/West Africa Mission director Alex Deprez said, “We know well the benefits of increased trade for rural communities across Africa. The GSA is pioneering efforts to grow markets and improve the livelihoods of rural women and their families that stand at the base of the shea value chain. We are proud to partner in these activities.”

The partnership will match up to \$6.5 million in USAID funds with \$6.5 million in private sector funding raised by the GSA to implement promotional and sustainability activities in Benin, Burkina Faso, Cote d'Ivoire, Ghana, Mali, and Nigeria:

- Construct 250 warehouses for women shea collector and processor groups.
- Provide capacity building and trainings for 137,500 women shea collectors and processors.
- Launch health and safety initiatives for women collectors.
- Improve the financial benefit of women collectors and processors by 50%.
- Launch research projects to improve shea tree planting materials.
- Support tree planting campaigns and improved management of parklands.
- Launch conservation resource conservation projects to reduce wood and water use.
- Host annual conferences and exhibitions in Africa, the United States, and the European Union.
- A variety of other international engagements to grow shea markets worldwide.

The GSA is a non-profit industry association with 400 members from 31 countries including women's groups, brands and retailers, suppliers, and NGOs. Through public-private partnerships, the GSA promotes industry sustainability, quality practices and standards, and demand for shea in food and cosmetics.

The USAID/West Africa regional mission's goal is to promote social and economic well-being advanced by West Africans. Spanning 21 countries, USAID/West Africa designs and implements programs with West African partners to strengthen systems of non-violent conflict management, support economic growth, and expand quality health services. The American people, through USAID, provide economic and humanitarian assistance in more than 100 countries worldwide.

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