

TERMS OF REFERENCE

Context Analysis and Baseline Study of Shea Industry Next Gen Empowerment (SHINE) Program

1 About the Global Shea Alliance

Established in 2011, the Global Shea Alliance is a non-profit industry association with headquarters in Accra, Ghana. The GSA currently has 849 members from 38 different countries. The GSA's membership includes women's groups, small businesses, suppliers, international food and cosmetic brands, retailers, and non-profit organisations. The GSA's mission is to design, develop, and deliver strategies that drive a competitive and sustainable shea industry worldwide, improving the livelihoods of rural African women and their communities. Specifically, The GSA is currently implementing the following initiatives:

Quality

- Quality trainings for women's groups on kernel collection, processing, and storage.
- Implementation of kernel quality standards in collaboration with members and national/regional standards bodies.
- Small business trainings including accounting, marketing, packaging and formulation workshops.

Promotion

- Annual international conferences in West Africa, Europe, and the United States.
- Annual African cosmetics brand exhibition.
- International policy analysis and advocacy to remove trade barriers.
- Research on shea benefits in food and cosmetics.
- African national association development.
- International consumer and industry media engagement.

Sustainability

- Implementation of multi-stakeholder guidelines for sustainable business practices.
- Large-scale development projects including warehouse construction, business development trainings, health and safety initiatives, parkland management, improved planting materials, and conservation pilot projects.

2 Program Background and Rationale

Shea Industry Next Gen Empowerment (SHINE) initiative is a robust, industry-focused, program designed to enhance the entrepreneurial capacities and climate resilience of financially disadvantaged young women living in the shea-producing regions of selected West African countries. It is a scaleup of a successful program in shea called Shea Business Empowerment Program (SBEP). This was a three - year USD6.2M program implemented by Global Shea Alliance (GSA) in partnership with the Foundation in Ghana. The program which ended in June 2025 supported young women with entrepreneurship skills, access to market and finance and unlocked work opportunities

for over 50K young people (100 percent women). SHINE integrates key learnings from SBEP to connect rural young women into the shea value chain by leveraging the rapidly growing \$30 billion market for cosmetic products and edible oils in West Africa. SHINE aims to capture \$1.5 billion of this market to create dignified and fulfilling work opportunities for 374,865 financially disadvantaged rural young women aged 18–35, including 18,743 (5%) People living With Disabilities (PWDs) and 18,743 (5%) Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs). The first phase of the project will be implemented in Ghana and Benin, with plans for gradual expansion to additional countries over the five-year implementation period.

The project aims to create a total of 145,378 Youth in Dignified and Fulfilling (D&F) Work opportunities across the initial implementation countries (Ghana and Benin). Ghana will contribute 104,193 opportunities, representing approximately 72% of the total target for initial phase, while Benin will contribute 41,185 opportunities, representing approximately 28% of the total target.

Country	Youth in D&F Work Target	Percentage Contribution
Ghana	104,193	71.7%
Benin	41,185	28.3%
Total	145,378	100%

A robust pre-implementation context analysis and baseline study is a foundational requirement before any programmatic activity commences. The scale-up Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning Plan recognises the importance of contextual monitoring i.e. tracking political, economic, environmental, and socio-cultural dynamics, as a core pillar of adaptive management. Conducting a structured context analysis at the outset is important to validate the underlying assumptions, better understand potential risks, and ensure that implementation strategies are responsive to local realities and conditions. This context will strengthen the program’s ability to align interventions with real needs, address structural barriers, and anticipate risks, thereby enhancing effective delivery and safeguarding participants.

2.1 Program Outcomes

Outcome 1: Strengthened market relationships between shea cooperatives, SMEs and private sector actors



Outcome 2: Young women-led shea enterprises strengthened to undertake value-added processing

Outcome 3: Climate-smart enterprises established to enhance the resilience of shea-producing landscapes

Outcome 4: Improved productivity of shea kernel processing

3 Purpose of the Context Analysis and Baseline Study

The overall goal of this assignment is to generate robust evidence to inform the design, implementation, monitoring, learning, and adaptive management of the SHINE programme in Ghana and Benin. The assignment will achieve this through four complementary study components: (i) a Baseline Study, (ii) a Context Analysis, (iii) a Gender, Disability and Social Inclusion (GEDSI) Assessment, and (iv) a Youth Employment and Market Opportunity Assessment. (v) Validation of Theory of Change (TOC).

Together, these components will provide a comprehensive understanding of the operating environment, beneficiary conditions, labour market opportunities, gender and social inclusion dynamics, and the barriers and enabling factors that influence young women's participation in dignified and fulfilling employment opportunities within the shea value chain.

3.1 Component 1: Baseline Study

The Baseline Study will establish benchmark values for all relevant programme indicators and provide quantitative and qualitative evidence against which programme progress and outcomes can be measured throughout implementation. The findings of baseline study will contribute to strengthening monitoring, evaluation, accountability, and learning (MEAL) processes throughout the project lifecycle. The study will establish benchmark values for key indicators and generate evidence to inform programme design, implementation, adaptive management, and strategic decision-making.

3.2 Component 2: Context Analysis

The Context Analysis will examine the broader policy, institutional, environmental, economic, social, and market systems context within which the programme will operate. It will identify key opportunities, risks, assumptions, and contextual factors that may influence programme implementation and sustainability in Ghana and Benin.

3.3 Component 3: Gender, Disability and Social Inclusion (GEDSI) Assessment

The GEDSI Assessment will analyse gender norms, power relations, social inclusion dynamics, and barriers affecting participation in the shea value chain. Attention will be given to young women, persons with disabilities, internally displaced persons, and individuals experiencing intersecting forms of exclusion. This will include integrating Gender Base Violence (GBV) risk mapping into the study, with particular attention to IDP communities and shea parkland collection areas where women, girls, and other vulnerable groups may face

heightened protection risks. The study will also identify and document existing GBV referral pathways within each target area to ensure that data collection teams are adequately equipped to safely and ethically refer participants who disclose GBV-related incidents or concerns to appropriate support and response services during the study. In addition, GBV-sensitive and inclusion-focused questions will be integrated into baseline instruments to assess protection concerns, safety perceptions, access to services, participation barriers, and the experiences of vulnerable and marginalised groups within the target communities. The assessment will identify constraints, opportunities, and recommendations to strengthen inclusive and gender-transformative programme implementation.

3.4 Component 4: Youth Employment and Market Opportunity Assessment

The Youth Employment and Market Opportunity Assessment will validate the programme's pathways for creating dignified and fulfilling employment opportunities for young people. It will assess existing and emerging opportunities within the shea value chain and related sectors, identify barriers to youth participation, and examine the feasibility and relevance of proposed intervention models, particularly in new geographic areas and implementation contexts.

3.5 Component 5: Validation of TOC

The study will also validate the project's pathways and assumptions for creating dignified and fulfilling employment opportunities for young people, especially in geographic areas, value chains, and implementation contexts that are new to the programme. This will help determine whether the proposed interventions are appropriate for local conditions, identify opportunities for adaptation, and strengthen the evidence base for scaling successful approaches across additional countries during the project implementation period.

4 Specific Objectives

Recognising the breadth of issues to be examined, the assignment will be structured around four complementary study components: (i) Baseline Study, (ii) Context Analysis, (iii) Gender, Disability and Social Inclusion (GEDSI) Assessment, and (iv) Youth Employment and Enterprise Assessment. Each component will generate distinct findings and recommendations while contributing to an integrated evidence base for programme implementation and learning.

4.1 Baseline Study

The Baseline Study will:

- Establish benchmark values for all key programme indicators at output, outcome, and impact levels.
- Generate baseline evidence on the socio-economic characteristics, livelihoods, employment status, income sources, financial inclusion, resilience capacities, and access to productive resources among target beneficiaries.

- Assess the current status, operational capacity, business performance, growth potential, market access, financial inclusion, and employment generation capacity of SMEs participating in or linked to the shea value chain.
- Generate evidence to support future monitoring, evaluation, accountability, and learning (MEAL) processes and impact measurement.

The baseline aspect is expected to assess the status/establish benchmarks of the following outcome indicators:

TOC Level	Partner TOC details	Partner Measures/Indicators	Shared Measures 2.0
Goal/Impact	Create 132,373 dignified and fulfilling work opportunities for young women in Ghana & Benin	Number of dignified and fulfilling jobs created (youth only)	SM 6.1: % of youth accessing dignified & fulfilling work
Outcomes	Strengthened market relationships between shea cooperatives, SMEs and private sector actors	<p>Percentage increase in sales/revenue for SMEs</p> <p>Supplementary indicator 1: Percentage of programme-supported services, training, and market systems assessed as accessible and inclusive for persons with disabilities.</p> <p>Supplementary indicator 2: Percentage of young women with disabilities reporting meaningful participation in cooperatives, leadership structures, and economic decision-making.</p> <p>Supplementary indicator 3: Percentage of women who can independently decide how income earned from shea activities is used.</p> <p>Supplementary indicator 4: Percentage of women and girls who report feeling safe when accessing shea parklands, water points, markets, or livelihood sites.</p> <p>Supplementary indicator 5: Percentage of women reporting experiences of harassment, intimidation, or exploitation during shea collection or trading activities.</p>	SM 4.1: % of enterprises showing growth through increased revenue

Outcomes	Young women-led shea enterprises strengthened to undertake value-added processing	Number of young women employed in value addition	SM 5.1: Number of employed youth (wage and self-employment)
Outcomes	Climate resilience of shea-producing landscapes enhanced through the restoration of degraded parklands	Total number of young women employed in agroforestry enterprises	SM 5.1: Number of employed youth (wage and self-employment)
Outcomes	Improved productivity of shea kernel processing	Number of jobs created at kernel processing centers	SM 5.1: Number of employed youth (wage and self-employment)
		Number of women trained in aggregation and processing techniques	SM 1.1: Number of individuals accessing work-enabling services (all categories)

It is expected that data disaggregation will follow GSA minimum disaggregation procedure. Disability-disaggregated data collection should utilise internationally recognised functional disability identification tools such as the Washington Group Questions. Thus, disaggregation by age, sex, disability, numerator/denominator of percentage indicators, and location of beneficiary.

4.2 Context Analysis

The Context Analysis will:

- Assess the economic, political, institutional, security, environmental, and socio-cultural conditions that may influence programme implementation.
- Analyse stakeholder ecosystems, including government institutions, private sector actors, financial institutions, civil society organisations, traditional authorities, and development partners.
- Assess climate, environmental, and agroforestry conditions, including land use practices, ecosystem degradation, climate vulnerabilities, and community adaptation capacities.
- Identify key risks, vulnerabilities, assumptions, and contextual factors that may affect programme implementation, sustainability, and scalability.

The analysis will systematically explore six core context dimensions; each directly linked to the program's Theory of Change and MEL framework:

4.2.1 Economic & Labor Market Context

This dimension examines the macroeconomic environment and labor market conditions that shape young women's livelihood opportunities. Key areas of inquiry include poverty rates, income distribution, youth unemployment, and women's economic participation in shea-producing regions including disability-related barriers to employment, entrepreneurship, market participation, asset ownership, financial inclusion, and access to productive resources. The analysis will review secondary data from national statistical agencies and international databases, supplemented with KII insights from government officials and private sector actors.

4.2.2 Shea Value Chain Analysis

A value chain-specific lens will trace the shea supply chain from parkland collection to processing, aggregation, trade, and export. The analysis will examine current value chain actor configurations, price dynamics, quality standards, market linkage structures, and existing cooperative networks. The analysis should assess accessibility and inclusion barriers across the shea value chain, including physical infrastructure, processing technologies, transportation systems, communication systems, and market access mechanisms. This dimension is essential for calibrating the program's market linkage, processing infrastructure, and cooperative formation interventions to actual value chain conditions.

4.2.3 Climate, Environment & Agroforestry Readiness

The program's climate resilience component requires a clear understanding of the current state of shea parklands, observed climate variability, and community readiness to engage in agroforestry enterprises. The assessment should analyse how climate risks and environmental degradation disproportionately affect marginalised groups, including young women with disabilities and displaced populations. The context analysis will draw on remote sensing data, secondary environmental assessments, and community-level observations to assess tree density, evidence of degradation, and existing restoration initiatives. This dimension informs the design of community nurseries and agroforestry enterprise models.

4.2.4 Political, Security & Policy Environment

As the first phase of the project will be implemented in Ghana and Benin, the context analysis should focus specifically on these two countries and provide a clear assessment of the political, security, and policy environment within the target implementation areas. The analysis will review existing government policies related to the shea sector, cooperative regulatory frameworks, civic space conditions, security incident patterns, and the status of IDP displacement in the selected regions of Ghana and Benin. Findings from the assessment will directly inform the program's risk register and contextual monitoring system, including the quarterly contextual updates submitted by Country Program Managers.

4.3 Gender, Disability and Social Inclusion (GEDSI) Assessment

Given the program's gender-transformative mandate, the analysis will invest significant attention in understanding gender dynamics, social norms, power structures, and inclusion. This includes examining women's decision-making agency at household and community levels, barriers to cooperative membership, social attitudes toward young women's economic leadership, and the specific situations of persons with disabilities (PWDs) and IDPs within shea-producing communities, with particular attention to intersectional discrimination, unpaid care burdens, stigma, social isolation, communication barriers, and exclusion from leadership and decision-making spaces. This dimension informs indicator design, especially the gender agency module of the annual employment survey. To strengthen the programme's inclusion agenda, the study will adopt an intersectional lens to understand overlapping vulnerabilities. This will include examining the experiences of groups such as young women with disabilities, displaced women, young women with disabilities who are also displaced, and other marginalised populations whose identities and circumstances may compound barriers to participation and benefit. The study will assess how these intersecting factors shape access to economic opportunities, services, training, leadership roles, markets, and social support systems within project areas.

The GEDSI Assessment will:

- Examine gender norms, power relations, social inclusion dynamics, and barriers affecting participation in the shea value chain.
- Assess women's economic empowerment, decision-making power, leadership opportunities, mobility, unpaid care burdens, and access to productive resources.
- Analyse how disability, age, displacement status, literacy levels, marital status, poverty, and geographic location interact to influence economic participation and access to opportunities.
- Assess the accessibility and inclusiveness of cooperative structures, financial services, training systems, market access mechanisms, communication channels, and grievance mechanisms.
- Generate evidence-based recommendations to strengthen gender-transformative and disability-inclusive programme implementation.

4.4 Youth Employment and Enterprise Assessment

The Youth Employment and Enterprise Assessment will:

- Assess existing livelihood opportunities, enterprise ecosystems, market systems, and employment pathways available to young women within the shea value chain.

- Identify barriers and enabling factors affecting access to dignified and fulfilling employment opportunities.
- Examine enterprise development opportunities, market demand, financial services, business support systems, and value addition opportunities.
- Identify community capacities, local knowledge systems, and economic opportunities that can support sustainable employment creation and enterprise growth.
- Provide evidence-based recommendations to strengthen programme targeting, enterprise support, market systems interventions, and youth employment outcomes.

In addition, the study will analyse financial inclusion and access to capital. This dimension examines the financial services landscape for women-led cooperatives and SMEs in target areas. The analysis will review the availability and terms of rural finance products, mobile money penetration, savings group culture, and any regulatory or institutional barriers to financial inclusion. The assessment should specifically examine whether financial products and services are accessible to young women with disabilities, including physical, communication, digital, and procedural accessibility. Findings will directly inform the program's blended finance strategy and the design of financial literacy and cooperative savings support.

4.5 Validation of the Theory of Change (ToC)

The Validation of the Theory of Change component aims to assess the relevance, feasibility, and contextual appropriateness of the programme's proposed pathways for creating dignified and fulfilling employment opportunities for young people within the shea value chain.

The TOC validation will:

- Validate the key assumptions underpinning the programme's Theory of Change, including assumptions related to youth employment, women's economic empowerment, SME growth, market access, access to finance, and institutional support.
- Assess the feasibility and relevance of the proposed intervention pathways for creating dignified and fulfilling employment opportunities in the target countries and implementation areas.
- Examine the enabling factors, barriers, risks, and contextual conditions that may influence programme implementation, effectiveness, and sustainability.
- Assess whether the proposed pathways adequately address the needs and constraints of young women, persons with disabilities, internally displaced persons (IDPs), and other marginalised groups.

- Identify opportunities to strengthen, adapt, or refine the Theory of Change to improve programme relevance, inclusion, effectiveness, and scalability across different implementation contexts.
- Provide evidence-based recommendations to inform programme design, adaptive management, and future expansion into new countries and geographic areas.

The findings from all five components will be synthesised into an integrated set of recommendations to inform programme design, implementation, adaptive management, safeguarding, partnership development, monitoring systems, and future scale-up efforts.

5 Ethics and Safeguarding

Global Shea Alliance is committed to ensuring that the rights, dignity, safety, and wellbeing of all individuals participating in data collection or analysis are respected and protected in accordance with its Safeguarding Policy. The Consultant is therefore required to provide detailed step-by-step ethical and safeguarding measures and clearly explain how these will be implemented and monitored throughout the data collection process. This should include measures to ensure the safe, appropriate, non-discriminatory, and meaningful participation of all stakeholders, with particular attention to vulnerable groups, including IDPs and persons with disabilities.

The consultant shall describe how accessibility and reasonable accommodation measures will be integrated into the study process, including provisions such as sign language interpretation, accessible venues, transport support, accessible communication formats, and adapted informed consent procedures. The consultant shall also explain how confidentiality, privacy, anonymity, and informed consent of participants will be guaranteed throughout the study.

In addition, the consultant should demonstrate disability-inclusive safeguarding measures that address the heightened risks of exploitation, abuse, harassment, stigma, exclusion, and GBV faced by women, girls, and young women with disabilities. This should include clear procedures for the safe and ethical handling of GBV disclosures during data collection, including the identification and documentation of existing GBV referral pathways within the target areas to ensure that participants who disclose protection concerns or GBV-related incidents can be appropriately referred to available support and response services.

The consultant must also identify any potential ethical, safeguarding, protection, or operational risks associated with the consultancy and provide clear mitigation measures. It should be noted that consultants who fail to adequately detail ethics and safeguarding processes in their proposals will not be considered.



6 Scope of work

The context analysis and baseline will cover the program's Phase 1 implementation areas in Ghana and Benin, with a focus on shea-producing districts and communities identified in the program's geographic targeting framework. The analysis will prioritise communities in the following categories:

- Communities where women's cooperatives are already present or forming (to understand enabling conditions).
- Communities with limited prior NGO programming, underserved communities, communities with limited market connectivity and infrastructural access (to understand gaps and conditions).
- Communities in or near conflict-affected or IDP-hosting areas as well as communities with limited access to disability-inclusive services and economic opportunities (to assess security and inclusion context).
- Communities with identified agroforestry potential (to assess climate resilience readiness).

7 Data Collection Methodology

The context analysis will apply a rigorous mixed-methods approach, combining secondary data review with structured primary data collection. The approach is designed to be efficient, participatory, and ethically grounded, consistent with the program's data quality assurance and ethics procedures. All data collection processes should adopt disability-inclusive and gender-responsive approaches to ensure meaningful participation of persons with diverse impairments and support needs.

7.1 Secondary Data Review

Desk review of existing national, regional, and sectoral data will be conducted before fieldwork to maximise the use of available evidence and sharpen the focus of primary data collection.

7.2 Key Informant Interviews (KIIs)

Semi-structured KIIs will be conducted with a purposively selected sample of approximately 50-60 key informants across both countries, representing government institutions, private sector actors, financial institutions, civil society organisations, peer programs, Organisations of Persons with Disabilities (OPDs), women-led disability organisations, disability rights advocates, and service providers supporting persons with disabilities.

7.3 Survey and Focus Group Discussions (FGDs)

A minimum of 13–15 Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) will be conducted across the two implementation countries to generate in-depth qualitative insights on community experiences, opportunities, challenges, and perceptions related to youth employment, gender equality, social inclusion, and participation in the shea value chain. Indicatively, 8–9 FGDs will be conducted in Ghana and 5–6 FGDs in Benin, reflecting the relative scale of project implementation and beneficiary reach in each country.



FGDs will include dedicated groups of young women engaged in shea-related activities, cooperative members, youth beneficiaries, and, where feasible and appropriate, Persons with Disabilities (PWDs), internally displaced persons (IDPs), and other marginalised groups. Participatory facilitation techniques and qualitative inquiry tools will be used to generate evidence on lived experiences, aspirations, barriers, preferences, social norms, and community priorities.

While the proposed number of FGDs provides an indicative minimum target, the final sample size will be guided by the principle of data saturation. Additional discussions may be conducted where necessary to ensure that data collection continues until no significant new themes, perspectives, or insights emerge across target groups, geographic locations, and implementation contexts. This approach will strengthen the depth, credibility, and representativeness of the qualitative findings and support a more nuanced understanding of factors influencing dignified and fulfilling employment opportunities for young people.

7.4 Direct Observation

Field enumerators will conduct structured community observations during site visits, using the Community Observation Checklist to document infrastructure conditions, environmental indicators, organisational structures, and social dynamics. The consultant will be responsible for developing and adapting a Community Observation Checklist as part of the assignment, drawing on the study objectives, project theory of change, and key learning questions. Observations will serve as an independent source of evidence that does not rely solely on self-reported information and will be used to validate, contextualise, and enrich findings from other data collection methods. The proposed observation checklist should be submitted to GSA for review and approval as part of the study methodology and data collection toolkit during the inception phase.

7.5 Sampling Approach

The context analysis and baseline will use purposive sampling for all primary data collection, targeting communities, informants, and participants based on their direct relevance to program theory and implementation strategy. KII respondents will be selected to cover all major stakeholder categories. FGD participants will be recruited with support from Sustainability Partners and local community structures. All FGD participants in each community should represent young women aged 18–35. Sampling should intentionally ensure representation of women with different impairment types, support needs, age groups, and displacement situations. Data collection should avoid tokenistic representation and ensure meaningful participation of persons with disabilities across all study components.

The consultant will be expected to clearly justify the proposed sample composition, demonstrate how representation across key target groups will be achieved, and explain how potential sampling biases will be mitigated. While purposive sampling will guide participant selection, the final sample should be sufficiently diverse to capture a broad range of experiences, perspectives, and contextual realities across implementation areas.

Qualitative data from KIIs and FGDs will be transcribed, coded, and analysed thematically using a framework analysis approach organised around the six context dimensions. An intersectional analytical framework will be used to examine how overlapping identities and vulnerabilities influence participation, inclusion, resilience, and economic opportunity. Secondary data will be synthesised into a Context Analysis Evidence Table, which will aggregate key statistics, trends, and observations by dimension and country. The analysis will assess the status of each major ToC assumption and flag any assumptions that appear weak, uncertain, or requiring adaptation.

The synthesis report will produce a Country Context Profile for Ghana and Benin respectively, and a cross-cutting Risk and Assumption Register that will be integrated into the program's risk register from inception.

8 Expected Key Deliverables

Phase/Study Component	Key Activities	Deliverables	Lead
1. Inception and Study Design	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Conduct inception meetings with GSA and key stakeholders. b. Review project documents and existing evidence. c. Develop methodology, sampling framework, workplan, quality assurance procedures, and accessibility measures. d. Develop and pre-test data collection tools. e. Recruit and train enumerators. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Inception Report containing; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Detailed methodology for all study components - Sampling strategy and sample sizes. - Data collection instruments. - Accessibility and Inclusion Plan. - Safeguarding Protocols. - Data Management and Analysis Plan. - Enumerator Training Report. 	Consultant
2. Baseline Study	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Conduct quantitative surveys among target beneficiaries, households, cooperatives, and SMEs. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Clean quantitative dataset. - Indicator reference tables and baseline values. - Baseline Study Report component with indicator findings, 	Consultant



	<p>b. Establish benchmark values for all project indicators.</p> <p>c. Analyse socio-economic conditions, employment status, income levels, market participation, and enterprise performance.</p>	<p>disaggregation, and benchmarks for future measurement.</p>	
3. Context Analysis	<p>a. Review secondary data and policies.</p> <p>b. Conduct KIIs and stakeholder consultations.</p> <p>c. Assess political, economic, environmental, institutional, market, and socio-cultural contexts.</p> <p>d. Assess risks and programme assumptions.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Country Context Profile – Ghana. - Country Context Profile – Benin. - Stakeholder Mapping Matrix. - Theory of Change Assumptions Assessment. - Risk and Opportunity Analysis Report. 	Consultant
4. Gender, Disability and Social Inclusion (GEDSI) Assessment	<p>a. Conduct gender and disability-focused KIIs and FGDs.</p> <p>b. Analyse social norms, power relations, barriers to participation, accessibility, and inclusion.</p> <p>c. Apply intersectional analysis to understand overlapping vulnerabilities.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - GEDSI Assessment Report. - Gender Agency Baseline Findings. - Disability Inclusion Analysis. - Social Norms and Inclusion Assessment. - Recommendations for gender-transformative and disability-inclusive programming. 	Consultant
5. Youth Employment and Enterprise Assessment	<p>a. Assess employment pathways and market opportunities for young women.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Youth Employment and Enterprise Assessment Report. 	Consultant



	<p>b. Assess SME performance, business development needs, and growth potential.</p> <p>c. Analyse labour market opportunities and constraints within the shea value chain.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Market Systems and Employment Opportunity Analysis. - SME Capacity and Needs Assessment. - Recommendations for enterprise development and employment creation. 	
6. TOC Validation	<p>a. a. Review and validate programme pathways and assumptions.</p> <p>b. b. Test assumptions using evidence from all study components.</p> <p>c. c. Assess contextual factors influencing programme outcomes.</p> <p>d. d. Validate pathways to dignified and fulfilling work.</p> <p>e. e. Conduct stakeholder validation workshop.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - ToC Validation Report - Assumptions Validation Matrix. - Updated ToC and Results Framework recommendations. - Risk and Assumption Register. 	
7. Validation and Learning	<p>a. Prepare and present findings to stakeholders.</p> <p>b. Facilitate validation workshop.</p> <p>c. Collect feedback and refine findings.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Validation Workshop Presentation. - Validation Workshop Report. - Feedback and Response Matrix. 	Consultant / GSA
8. Final Synthesis and Reporting	<p>a. Integrate findings from all study components.</p> <p>b. Finalise reports and recommendations.</p> <p>c. Submit all data and supporting documentation.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Final Integrated Context Analysis and Baseline Report. - Executive Summary. - Country Profiles (Ghana and Benin). - Risk and Assumption Register. - Raw and Clean Datasets. 	Consultant



		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Codebooks and Analysis Files. - Final PowerPoint Presentation. 	
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9 Expected Qualifications

Global Shea Alliance requires individual Consultant(s)/firm lead with the following competencies and expertise to conduct the Context analysis and Baseline study:

- Demonstrate competence in the execution of a similar assignment
- Consultant’s team must be gender aware and demonstrate proven expertise in disability inclusion, inclusive research methodologies, safeguarding, and intersectional analysis, fluent in the English and French language both written and spoken, and ability to communicate in local dialects of northern Ghana and northern Benin is plus.
- Experience working with Organisations of Persons with Disabilities (OPDs) and conducting accessible data collection processes will be an added advantage.
- The consultant shall ensure that all enumerators and field staff undergo disability inclusion and safeguarding orientation prior to data collection. The consultant will be encouraged to recruit qualified enumerators with disabilities as part of the assessment team.
- Knowledgeable in the use of mobile data collection
- Should have adequate logistics (such as mobile tablets, mobile apps, and computers to perform all of the services required where applicable
- Have at least five years’ experience in qualitative and quantitative research/evaluation as well as demonstrate specific understanding and familiarity with the design and methodology, skills and experience needed to implement these methods.
- Outline safeguards security measures in place to ensure data confidentiality, data quality assurance and quality control mechanisms available and their efficacy to this study
- Have excellent knowledge in data analysis using Microsoft Excel, Minitab, SPSS, STATA and other statistical software.
- Ability to produce well-written reports, in plain and approachable text, demonstrating excellent analytical and communication skills.
- Ability to form constructive relationships with the relevant stakeholders
- Ability to meet strict deadlines

10 Technical Proposal

The technical proposal must exhibit outstanding knowledge, creativity, and innovation and must address in detail the content of the TOR as well as the following requirements. Provide evidence to support your claims and for cross-validations.

- Background of consultant’s firm/ individuals and propose team members
- Technical proposal should demonstrate a full understanding of TOR



- Ethical issues in data collection are well-articulated including disability-inclusive safeguarding, accessibility measures, adapted consent processes, and approaches for meaningful participation of persons with disabilities and individuals with high support needs.
- Outline relevant education & project-related expected minimum experience of each team member, knowledge of the local language of the related study locations, and CVs of team members.
- Assignment of similar nature in the past in the expected study locations
- Detail methodology and approach clearly stated and explained and must be related to TOR, assignment, evidence of familiarity with methodology and approach, skills and experience needed to implement these clearly justified
- itemised sampling methods and sample size, quality assurance and control measures in place
- Itemised activities and number of days needed for each (Detailed work plan covering 25 days)

11 Financial Proposal

The Consultant must submit a reasonable financial proposal with a detailed breakdown of costs with the following details:

- i. Itemised consultancy costs/fees per day
- ii. Itemised training including pretesting/piloting expenses, field data collection expenses, including lines for enumerator compensation, accommodation and transportation. Dedicated budget lines for accessibility and reasonable accommodation measures such as sign language interpretation, accessible transport, personal assistant support, and accessible materials.
- iii. Itemised administrative expenses
- iv. VAT/Taxes
- v. Validity period of quotations

The Consultant will be responsible for all travel and logistics associated with conducting the context and baseline assessment.

12 Consultant's Evaluation Criteria

Consultants will be selected through a competitive evaluation process based on both technical quality and financial competitiveness. Proposals will be evaluated using a weighted scoring system comprising a Technical Proposal (80%) and a Financial Proposal (20%). Only

consultants who achieve a minimum technical score of 70% of the technical evaluation score will proceed to the financial evaluation stage.

A. Technical Evaluation (80%)

Evaluation Criteria	Weight (%)
Methodology and Technical Approach	35
Relevant Experience in Similar Assignments	20
Understanding of the Assignment	10
Experience in Gender, Disability and Social Inclusion (GEDSI)	10
Work Plan and Implementation Schedule	10
Team Composition and Qualifications	5
Knowledge of the Shea Sector and Rural Livelihoods Context	5
References and Past Performance	5
Total Technical Score	100

The technical score will subsequently be weighted at 80% of the final evaluation score.

B. Financial Evaluation (20%)

Financial proposals of consultants meeting the minimum technical threshold will be opened and evaluated. The lowest priced financial proposal will receive the maximum financial score, while all other proposals will receive proportionately lower scores using the following formula:

$$\text{Financial Score} = (\text{Lowest Financial Proposal} \div \text{Consultant's Financial Proposal}) \times 100$$

The resulting financial score will then be weighted at 20% of the final evaluation score.

C. Final Combined Score

The final score will be calculated as follows:

$$\text{Final Score} = (\text{Technical Score} \times 80\%) + (\text{Financial Score} \times 20\%)$$

The consultant with the highest combined score will be recommended for contract award, subject to successful due diligence, reference checks, and contract negotiations.



13 Application

Interested and qualified consultants are invited to submit a proposal for this assignment. The detailed Terms of Reference (TOR) and supporting documents can be obtained upon request by emailing e.degurah@globalshea.com.

Consultants are encouraged to request the TOR well in advance of the submission deadline to allow sufficient time for proposal preparation. Consultants are required to submit the following:

- A Technical Proposal demonstrating understanding of the assignment, proposed methodology, work plan, sampling approach, team composition, and quality assurance measures;
- Detailed Curriculum Vitae (CVs) of all proposed key personnel;
- A detailed Work Plan showing the proposed timeline and level of effort for each phase of the assignment;
- A Financial Proposal in local currency, providing a detailed breakdown of all costs, including professional fees, fieldwork expenses, travel, accommodation, data collection, analysis, report writing, and all applicable VAT, taxes, and statutory charges.

Proposals should be submitted electronically to m.sakyi@globalshea.com with a copy to e.degurah@globalshea.com no later than 4 July 2026.