

Call for Proposal

Shea Business Empowerment Program (SBEP) II

Establishment of Agroforestry Community Enterprises

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 Phase 1 of the programme, the Global Shea Alliance (GSA) seeks to establish 22 agroforestry community enterprises (20 in Ghana and 2 in Benin) to strengthen climate resilience and diversify livelihoods within shea-producing landscapes.

The intervention will support cooperatives and young women to develop environmentally sustainable income-generating activities that complement the shea value chain. **Potential activities may include, but are not limited to,** apiculture (beekeeping), non-timber forest product (NTFP) enterprises such as baobab and moringa value chains, and organic waste recycling initiatives such as potash production. **These activities are provided as examples, and participating cooperatives and young women will not be required to undertake any specific activity.** The programme will support enterprises that are appropriate to local opportunities, interests, resources and market potential, with the aim of strengthening household and community livelihoods while reducing pressure on natural resources.

The activity is designed to contribute to economic resilience, climate adaptation, biodiversity conservation, sustainable land use, and dignified employment opportunities, with a particular focus on financially disadvantaged young women living in rural and shea-producing communities. Each agroforestry enterprise is expected to support the creation of livelihood and employment opportunities for at least 91 financially disadvantaged young people, with women at the centre of enterprise ownership and management.

The potential partners should have an existing processing centre or nursery and will be responsible for identifying and supporting young women aged 18–35 to establish, manage, and sustain youth-led agroforestry enterprises integrated into the shea landscape economy. This will include facilitating enterprise development, capacity strengthening, and linkages necessary to enable the enterprises to become viable and sustainable sources of income and employment

2. Objective of the Call

The objective of this call is to engage qualified partners operating within shea-producing communities to mobilize and empower financially disadvantaged young women (aged 18–35) in hard-to-reach rural areas through the establishment of climate-smart agroforestry enterprises.

3. Scope of Support

The SHINE SBEP II program will prioritize the development of climate-smart community enterprises through structured technical assistance, business development support, and productive asset provision to participating cooperatives.

Support will focus on strengthening cooperative capacity to establish and operate viable agroforestry enterprises that contribute to environmental sustainability and economic resilience within shea-producing landscapes.

4. Roles and Responsibilities of Parties

Selected partners will be responsible for the following:

- i. GSA Member & Sustainability Partner**
 - a. Identify target locations and communities, including compiling a list of financially disadvantaged young women aged 18–35.
 - b. Lead community entry processes and stakeholder engagement to support the establishment of agroforestry enterprises and cooperatives.
 - c. Organize participating young women into cooperatives while ensuring inclusion targets of at least 5% persons with disabilities (PWDs) and 5% internally displaced persons (IDPs).
 - d. Conduct training needs assessments for participating cooperatives and young women.

- e. Adapt and deliver GSA-approved training curricula on agroforestry enterprise development, climate-smart production systems, cooperative governance, and business management.
- f. Facilitate the establishment of agroforestry enterprises such as: (a) apiculture enterprises; (b) non-timber forest product enterprises, e.g. baobab and moringa; and (c) waste recycling enterprises, including potash production.
- g. Provide business coaching and mentorship to strengthen enterprise management and sustainability.
- h. Facilitate market linkages for agroforestry products and services.
- i. Support cooperatives to establish relationships with financial institutions, including account opening, financial literacy, and business planning support.
- j. Support environmental compliance and sustainable natural resource management practices within enterprise operations.

ii. Global Shea Alliance (GSA)

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

- a. Provide funding to support technical training and enterprise establishment activities.
- b. Develop and share training curricula and technical materials for agroforestry enterprise development.
- c. Provide productive equipment and inputs required for enterprise operations, including: (a) beehives and apiculture equipment; (b) tree seedlings and planting materials; (c) processing equipment for non-timber forest products; (d) waste recycling and potash production equipment; and (e) personal protective equipment (PPE).
- d. Facilitate cooperative registration and formalization processes.
- e. Deploy young graduates to undertake business internships and coaching support with participating cooperatives.
- f. Monitor, track, and evaluate systemic changes and the overall impact of the intervention on livelihoods, biodiversity, and climate resilience.
- g. Facilitate linkages between cooperatives and potential off-takers, buyers, and ecosystem restoration initiatives.

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.
- Have an existing processing centre or nursery
- Demonstrate proven experience in mobilizing and engaging young women, particularly in hard-to-reach rural communities.
- Demonstrate experience in agroforestry, climate-smart agriculture, environmental sustainability, or natural resource management interventions.
- Have the technical capacity to support enterprises such as apiculture, non-timber forest production, waste recycling, or related green enterprises.
- Show experience in enterprise development, cooperative strengthening, and market systems facilitation.
- Demonstrate experience in delivering practical, hands-on training in rural contexts.
- Demonstrate experience engaging financial institutions and facilitating access to finance for community enterprises.

6. Application Criteria

Applications will be assessed based on the following:

- Compliance with eligibility requirements
- Technical understanding of agroforestry enterprise development
- Potential for social and economic impact for disadvantaged young women
- Environmental sustainability and climate resilience considerations
- Geographic inclusion, with priority given to underserved areas
- Budget clarity and reasonableness
- Capacity to deliver community-based enterprise support
- Successful completion of due diligence assessments

7. How to Apply

interested applicants are required to [complete the application form](#), add a proposed budget and submit to the GSA Secretariat on or before Friday **2nd October 2026**. Applications should be addressed to **Prince Nunoo, Senior Programs Manager (Projects)** and submitted via email at p.nunoo@globalshea.com.