



PRESS RELEASE

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New national shea board must help build industry

Global Shea Alliance contributing actively to new board, keen to see positive results for all stakeholders

Accra, Ghana, Dec. 15, 2011 – A new national shea board can facilitate valuable feedback between private and public sector stakeholders and should contribute to industry’s sustainable development, the Global Shea Alliance said today.

“The shea industry in West Africa is at a crossroads and its potential to improve the lives of millions of people is now clearly in the public eye,” the Alliance’s Executive Committee said in a statement. “As the recognized industry body, the Global Shea Alliance is participating as a member of the steering committee for the new shea board and will be keenly interested in how it facilitates the private sector’s voice in the making of policy.”

In Ghana, hundreds of thousands of women supplement their family’s incomes by collecting shea nuts and selling them to international traders; tens of thousands make shea butter, used locally in the care of skin and to prepare food and which finds its way into natural cosmetics sold internationally. Major international companies servicing the food industry and leading global retail brands connect these stakeholders along the value chain to consumers in end markets. The export of shea is generating important revenue – which is key to the development of Ghana and, indeed, the sub-region.

Global Shea Alliance President Eugenia Akuete is the only woman member of the steering committee. Mrs. Akuete participated in the steering committee’s inaugural meetings in Tamale in early December.

“In reality, Alliance members have contributed to policy debate on shea for many years,” Akuete said. “We just were not organized as an alliance. At annual shea industry conferences, our agenda has always included discussion of the ramifications of policy for the industry and we have provided important feedback to government on the advantages and disadvantages to various initiatives.”

Akuete noted that the next conference is set for April 23-27, 2012, in Cotonou, Benin.

www.globalshea.com/shea2012

About the Global Shea Alliance

The Global Shea Alliance is an international non-profit association of industry stakeholders whose mission is to represent and further the shared interests of the shea sector. The Alliance promotes shea worldwide, establishes industry standards for quality and sustainable sourcing and facilitates advocacy.

About the USAID West Africa Trade Hub

The USAID Trade Hub is home to the secretariat of the Global Shea Alliance. Since 2007, the USAID Trade Hub has facilitated over \$175 million in exports from West Africa to international markets and over \$53 million in investment, working closely with thousands of export-ready companies. www.watradehub.com

