

Shea 2012

Cotonou, Benin Apr 23-27, 2012



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shared value

access
advocate
brand
build
collaborate
communicate
conceive
concoct
construct
contribute
create
deliver
design
devise
detect
discover
engage
establish
finance
find
forge
form
formulate
generate
grow
imagine
improve
inform
initiate
innovate
institute
invent
locate
make
market
maximize
optimize
organize
pinpoint
plan
produce
promote
protect
recognize
set up
start
strengthen
sustain
uncover

Shea 2012: Shared Value will bring hundreds of shea business people to Cotonou in April. Book your hotel in advance and obtain your travel visa with help from the Global Shea Alliance Secretariat.

Cotonou. The first thing you'll notice are the motorcycles! Known as 'zemidjans' – "take me here quickly" – they scoot along the city streets. Cotonou, the economic capital of Benin (its official capital is Porto Novo), is one of West Africa's most exciting cities, with more than one million residents. Benin, where voodoo originates, has a rich history and its biggest city has a vibrant nightlife. The city is a major port, and is also home to an airport and a railway that links to Parakou, a major city in the north. Other features of Cotonou include Cotonou Friendship Stadium, Cotonou Cathedral, Cotonou Central Mosque, the Ancien Pont Bridge and the 20-hectare Dantokpa Market, which has a commercial turnover of over a billion CFA Francs a day. The National University of Benin is located in Cotonou. Bring loose clothing made of cotton and an umbrella – in April Cotonou is generally warm with occasional rain showers.

The **Marina Hotel** is hosting Shea 2012. The Global Shea Alliance has reserved rooms at the hotel but they will go fast! Please contact the Secretariat today if you would like to stay at the hotel. More information on available accommodation in Cotonou near to the conference will be posted on January 31, 2012! The Secretariat can assist you in finding appropriate accommodation but for liability reasons cannot book rooms for guests.



Language and Customs

The official language of the people of Benin is French. Benin is a multicultural and multi religious country.

Entry/Exit Requirements

A valid passport and visa are required for entry into the country. **Overseas** inquiries should be made at the nearest Benin embassy/consulate for more information. ***If you require a visa on arrival, kindly inform the Global Shea Alliance Secretariat (info@globalshea.com) immediately so we can arrange for an emergency visa; the fee is \$150. ECOWAS citizens do not require a visa if they have a valid ECOWAS member state passport.***

Most Convenient Airport

The international airport (Cotonou International Airport) is in town and only 5 minutes drive from the conference venue.

Airlines

The following major airlines fly to Cotonou, Benin. (You should reconfirm onward/return flights 72 hours in advance.)

Air France	Ethiopian Airlines
Air Burkina	Kenya Airways
Air Ivoire	KLM
Air Mali	Royal Air Maroc
Arik Air	Senegal Airlines
SN Brussels Airlines	Virgin Nigeria Airways
Mauritania Airlines	

Money

Benin is a part of the CFA zone in West Africa. Check the latest exchange rates online at www.xe.com or www.oanda.com. There are ATMs/POS in that accept visa and master credit/debit cards. Maximum withdrawals are generally limited to 100000 (CFA) per day (you can request an increase from your bank). Credit cards are accepted only at major hotels, shops and restaurants and some travel agencies. Cash advances on credit cards are available from banks that accept Visa cards. In general, you should ensure you have enough cash to cover any eventuality.

Health

Travelers requiring medicines should bring an adequate supply for the duration of their stay in Cotonou-Benin. Yellow fever vaccination is a requirement. Please contact your embassy for further information. It is always a good idea to carry an international vaccination certificate, known commonly as a "Yellow Card." Ask your doctor for more information.

Weather

Cotonou has a tropical savanna climate with dry winters. Humidity is high and rainstorms are likely in April.

Temperatures are relatively constant throughout the course of the year, with the average high temperatures around 30°C, and average low temperatures around 25°C.

Air-conditioners are installed at the venue for the meeting and in the hotel rooms.

Clothing

Smart casual clothing is recommended, preferably loose clothing made of 100% cotton.

Special Information

Photographing military subjects is restricted. Taking a photograph without permission in any public area may provoke a response from security personnel or offend the people being photographed. Taking photos of the U.S. Embassy is also prohibited.

Lodging

Rooms are reserved with special rates for participants and booking can be made referencing this event at:

Venue: Marina Hotel, Cotonou, Benin or any of the suggested hotels.

Date: April 23- 27, 2012

Organizers: Global Shea Alliance & USAID/West Africa Trade Hub

For answers to any of your questions, contact the Secretariat at info@globalshea.com.