

## Final Evaluation Report

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Your Details	
<b>Full Name</b>	Gideon Appiah
<b>Project Title</b>	Enhancing Grassroot Restoration and Conservation of the Vulnerable Shea Tree in the Lambussie District of Northern Ghana
<b>Application ID</b>	38640-1
<b>Date of this Report</b>	20 <sup>th</sup> December 2023

**1. Indicate the level of achievement of the project's original objectives and include any relevant comments on factors affecting this.**

Objective	Not achieved	Partially achieved	Fully achieved	Comments
Conduct community engagement and constitution of shea collectors and processing associations and purchasing of seedlings, distribution, and transplanting				We conducted engagement programmes across the three communities benefiting both male and female stakeholders. We also met with the traditional authorities of each community and the District Assembly as part of designing and implementing the project. Through the discussion with the community members and key authorities, the tree planting exercise was modified to a multi-benefiting activity comprising strategic planting of trees at landscape patches that will also serve as a conducive habitat for bee culture. The bee culture became relevant as it will serve as an alternative livelihood for charcoal burners. 30 bee hives were then constructed to be used for piloting beekeeping opportunities on the restored landscape patches. We observed that shea collection and processing is a female-dominant activity, whilst the charcoal burning business is a male-dominant activity. We constituted six shea collectors/processors associations and three charcoal burners associations. The charcoal burners were given the bee hives in groups for the pilot.
Advanced training in value-added butter processing and packaging to meet competitive national market standards and attract decent prices				All shea butter processors (total of 700) were brought together in each community and trained in areas like record keeping, shea nut storage, processing, and storage of the butter. We introduced a new technology of packaging shea butter in paper bags and packing cases which replaced the conventional storage of butter in plastics. This will reduce plastic use and save our environment. We also created

				<p>a link to jute bag suppliers for better storage of shea nuts. Women were also trained on how to use readily available deadwood materials for constructing platforms in shea nut storage rooms. We also linked all our shea processing groups to the ready market at the regional capital as well as the two major cities of Ghana (Accra and Kumasi).</p>
<p>Education and awareness on the reasons why conserving and sustainably utilizing shea trees is more sustainable and multi-benefiting than cutting for charcoal or timber.</p>				<p>Three different radio stations awareness creation programmes were organised to cover an audience of over 300,000. During the school surveys, we educated 900 students in all the three communities and clubs are being formed in each school to keep educating themselves even in the absence of our project team. Our direct community awareness creation also extended to all community members in each community where presentations were made with other educational materials promoting the essence of protecting shea trees. Also, billboards have been designed and to be mounted at vantage points of the communities. Three different community volunteer groups have been formed to assist in reporting noncompliance and further threats.</p>

**2. Describe the three most important outcomes of your project.**

**a).** Enhanced capacity established market linkages, and competitive pricing for shea processors. Each of the shea processing associations we established now has direct off-take agreements with buyers of their produce, both at the regional and national levels. This addresses our objective to increase the value addition of shea butter and establish good market linkages to attract competitive pricing.

**b).** Raised awareness among a direct audience of over 2,000 people and over 100,000 individuals indirectly through PowerPoint presentations and radio-based campaigns, respectively. Community members are beginning to understand the direct and indirect consequences of their actions. Authorities have declared their support for our project, and all local administrative and cultural processes and requirements are met for the success of this project.

**c).** Initiated the process of developing an action plan with guidelines and bylaws prohibiting the cutting of shea trees. With the already formed volunteers, the bylaws,

when finalised, will be sustained collaboratively by these volunteers. We have also collaborated with stakeholders to modify our tree planting exercise to include an alternative livelihood option (beekeeping) for charcoal burners, which is in the pilot state.

**3. Explain any unforeseen difficulties that arose during the project and how these were tackled.**

There was severe drought during the time of planting the tree seedlings, combined with both domestic and wild animal damage. To overcome this, we agreed with our project stakeholders to review our initial plan and shift from conducting contiguous plantation of shea to enrichment planting within degraded patches of landscapes near settlements where better care could be taken. This then created the opportunity to also utilise such patches for beekeeping, serving as an alternative livelihood source.

**4. Describe the involvement of local communities and how they have benefited from the project.**

Community engagement has been the centre of this project. At all stages of project activities, locals are placed at the core. Because of that, they feel respected and regarded as custodians of the project, fostering a sense of responsibility. School children have benefited from educational materials like exercise books customised with shea tree conservation information. Community volunteers have also received project t-shirts and training on fire management, threat detection, and reporting. Shea collectors and processors have benefited from capacity building training, such as record keeping, wooden panel construction, proper storage of shea nuts, new knowledge of packaging shea butter, and linkage to the supply of inputs such as jute bags and a ready market for shea butter. Charcoal burners have also been involved in the project, standing to benefit from alternative livelihood interventions such as beekeeping, which is being piloted by groups of charcoal burners.

**5. Are there any plans to continue this work?**

We have a long-term plan to make the communities the owners of the project by implementing an effective and sustainable management plan and providing alternative livelihood options for key actors. For example, the beekeeping being piloted will be fully implemented with further funding to cover a larger number of beneficiaries. Also, awareness creation is a matter of human behaviour that takes time to achieve measurable results. Continuing to create awareness is necessary as human behaviour keeps changing. Additionally, fully developing a management plan and community bylaws involves administrative, political, and cultural processes that also require time beyond the lifespan of this current phase. Therefore, we will continue these processes in anticipation of a successful establishment.

**6. How do you plan to share the results of your work with others?**

1. Through report writing and sharing.
2. Through scientific publications.

3. Through radio talks.
4. Community durbar.

**7. Looking ahead, what do you feel are the important next steps?**

1. Complete the management plan.
2. Establish community bylaws.
3. Fully implement the beekeeping option.
4. Continue the awareness creation.

**8. Did you use The Rufford Foundation logo in any materials produced in relation to this project? Did the Foundation receive any publicity during the course of your work?**

The logo was used to print the project t-shirts, educational materials, and signboards. Acknowledgment is always given to Rufford during any public engagement and project activity.

**9. Provide a full list of all the members of your team and their role in the project.**

**Gideon Appiah** is an MPhil student at the Department of Wildlife and Range Management at the Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology (KNUST) in Ghana, with a BSc in Natural Resources Management from KNUST. He has a keen interest in the interplay between forests, wildlife, and livelihoods, and has led and participated in conservation projects across Northern Ghana. Gideon brings scientific research experience in biodiversity conservation, focusing on plant ecology and social-ecological topics. Currently dedicated to researching and conserving threatened plant species in Ghana, he collaborates with scientific networks and has served as a project leader and team member for AquaLife Conservancy International.

As the Principal Investigator (PI), Gideon will leverage his professional, project, and scientific research experiences to lead and coordinate the overall activities of the project. He emphasizes the significance of the "small-to-bigger participation-in-all-communities" approach, acknowledging the challenge it poses to effective coordination.

**Rhoda Donkoh**, an Assistant Forest District Manager at the Ghana Forestry Commission, holds BSc and MSc degrees in Forest Resources Technology and Environmental Resources Management, respectively. Rhoda will lead awareness campaigns, educational programs, and stakeholder workshops. Her expertise in climate change and community-based resources management aligns with her commitment to addressing climate change impacts and natural resources conflicts.

**Haruna Yussif Kamagley**, a Forest Range Manager with the Forestry Commission of Ghana, specializes in socioeconomic surveys and tree planting activities. With a BSc in Forest Resources Technology, he has extensive experience in plantation development, monitoring illegal forest operations, and engaging stakeholders. Haruna's strengths lie in mobilizing rural communities for nursery development,

establishing private or community-based plantations on degraded lands, and formulating management and conservation strategies. Currently pursuing an MSc in Environmental Resources Management at KNUST, Haruna contributes valuable insights to the project's success.

**Mr. Titus Balebee** served as our local representative and facilitator responsible for all ground preparations for all our project activities. Titus is a teacher by profession, and his organizational skills are accurate, benefiting our project.

**10. Any other comments?**