



# **AMA SERWAA WOMEN'S PROJECT GHANA**

FIVE YEARS AGO MY HUSBAND AND I STARTED A NON PROFIT ORGANIZATION CALLED PHILANTROPHY HOST FAMILIES SERVICE IN WHICH WE SEND PARTICIPANTS TO GHANA TO WORK ON VARIOUS PROJECTS. ONE OF THE PROJECTS THAT WE STARTED WAS WORKING WITH THE AMA SERWAA WOMEN PROJECT OF NORTHERN GHANA. THE AMA SERWAA WOMEN'S PROJECT IS A SMALL GROUP OF seven WOMEN WHO PICK AND EXTRACT SHEA BUTTER FROM THE SHEA NUT TREE. WE SELECTED SEVEN hard working WOMEN FROM THE VILLAGE OF JISONAYILI WHO'S TRADE IS to PICK SHEA NUTS TO MAKE THE SHEA BUTTER. THESE WOMEN ARE MUSLIM WOMEN WHOM we purchase RAW SHEA BUTTER FROM.

THE SHEA TREE BEARS FRUIT ONCE A YEAR. THE TREE GROWS WILD AND IS NOT CULTIVATED. IT TAKES ABOUT 50 YEARS TO REACH MATURITY. ONCE EVERY YEAR, THE TREE PRODUCES LOT OF THE FRUIT FROM WHICH THE SHEA BUTTER IS EXTRACTED. THE WOMEN COLLECT THE NUTS, CRACK THEM OPEN, GRIND THE NUTS AND PLACE THEM IN A POT TO BOIL TO EXTRACT THE OIL WHICH IS CALLED THE SHEA BUTTER.

HALF OF THE MONEY FROM THE SELL OF THE SHEA BUTTER IS SENT TO THE AMA SERWAA WOMEN'S PROJECT WHICH HELPS IN BUYING TOOLS SUCH AS GOOD POTS TO COOK THE SHEA BUTTER, SPOONS. EVENTUALLY WHEN THERE IS ENOUGH MONEY RAISED BY DECEMBER OF 2003 WE WILL BE ABLE TO PURCHASE THEIR OWN SHEA NUT GRINDER. THIS WILL ENABLE THEM TO PRODUCE LARGE QUANTITY GRADE A SHEA BUTTER WHICH WILL ENABLE THEM TO BECOME SELF-SUFFICIENT.

When the women grind the shea nuts they know the quality. According to (Damata) if the quality of the shea nut butter is dark in color then it is a poor quality shea butter. The lighter the color, the better the quality of the shea butter. If the shea butter is not cooked well, then the shea butter will smell bad.

The process of making shea butter is not a easy process. The women will gather the shea nuts during the spring of the year. They dry the nuts for two to three months. They burn the nuts then break the nuts then send to be grind. After grinding the shea nuts they put the nuts in a pan of water. They stir before cooking. then they cook until it turns a creamy white color. If a person wish to purchase yellow shea butter, the women will add a natural root to make the shea butter look yellow. Afterward they will place the shea butter in a pottery jar to set. It takes two days before it is ready to sell.

Today this exclusively African beauty secret is being used in hundreds of western skin care products.

HERE IS A LIST OF WOMEN WHO PRODUCE THE SHEA BUTTER IN THE NORTHERN PART OF GHANA CALLED

TAMALE:

- (1) MOHAMMED AZARE
- (2) DAMATA ABUKARIA
- (3) DAMATA IDDRISU
- (4) LASAS
- (5) SALEMA MAJEED
- (6) RAMATA MOHAMMED
- (7) ALIMATU HARUNA

IF YOU HAVE ANY QUESTIONS REGARDING THE SHEA BUTTER OR THE WOMEN WHO PRODUCE THE SHEA BUTTER PLEASE FEEL FREE TO E-MAIL ME AT [benkeh1@msn.com](mailto:benkeh1@msn.com)

THANKS PHYLLIS KEH

## Facts about Shea Butter

Pure African Shea Butter has been used for generations in Africa to keep skin soft and shiny.

Today this exclusively African beauty secret is being used in hundreds of western skin care products. It is no wonder, because African Shea Butter is one of the most powerful natural skin conditioners in the world. But the products now showing up have almost all been diluted with other additives. Find out for yourself why there is no substitute for pure and natural Shea butter from Africa.

## Benefits of Shea Butter

- Helps heal scars, burns, and stretch marks.
- Prevents ashy skin, chapping, and skin rashes.
- Wonderful for "drummers hands" to ease sore & chapping skin.
- An ideal hair dressing that protects the scalp from sores and rashes.
- Helps prevent weak hair from breaking, fading, or thinning out.
- Fortifies cuticles and nails
- Helps rid the scalp of Dandruff.
- Helps bruises to heal.
- Helps drain toxins from sore muscles: perfect for sports participants
- Helps prevent skin irritation for babies: used for generations to help babies sleep better.
- Use after shaving to prevent irritation, and to restore skins natural luster.
- Ideal for dry skin, dermatitis, eczema, sunburn and athletes foot.,
- Rejuvenates skin pores and adds elasticity to skin.
- Firms up aging skin and helps clear wrinkles.
- Massage Shea butter into areas affected by arthritis, joint pains, or other muscular ache.
- Naturally contains vitamins A and E.

## More facts about Shea Butter

The Shea (Karite) tree grows in the grasslands of West Africa. It will often grow to a height of 50 feet or more; and produces shea nuts from which natural shea butter is extracted. The tree grows slowly, taking up to 20 years to produce fruit.

The nuts of the shea tree are normally harvested during the rainy season and sun dried over an extended period of time afterwards. Once sufficiently dried, the nuts are crushed and pounded into a powder. The powder is then boiled for four to five days to create the Shea butter. The process is the same that has been used and perfected through the generations in West Africa.

The leaves and bark of the shea tree also are used extensively in herbal remedies. The fruit is edible.

Africa's relationship with Shea butter is intimate in nature. The funeral beds of late kings are carved in the noble wood of an old Shea tree, and Shea butter has always served as a staple of African pharmacology. It acts as an effective decongestant, for example. Used for its draining and anti-inflammatory properties, it is soothing in sprains and strains, and is a widely used anti-arthritic treatment.