

72,000 Women, youth supported to create jobs in shea industry

**From Mohammed Fugu,
TAMALE**

MORE than 72,000 women and youth in Northern Ghana working in the shea value chain have benefited from a GHC3 million intervention to create dignified jobs for themselves and expand their businesses.

Dubbed "Shea Business Empowerment Programme (SBEP)", the three-year intervention has supported women shea collectors, women cooperatives and Small Medium Enterprises (SMEs) in the shea industry in Northern Ghana.

The project is being implemented by the Global Shea Alliance (GSA) with funding support from Mastercard Foundation. Other partners include Women for Change, Soft Tribe, Advans Ghana, Agrocenta and the University for Development Studies (UDS).

Improve living standards

At an impact assessment event in Tamale, the Managing Director of

Global Shea Alliance, Aaron Adu indicated that an amount of GHC3 million had been disbursed to the beneficiaries to expand their businesses and improve their standard of living.

He said several youth, particularly, students had been attached to the

shea cooperatives through internship programmes to learn and understudy their operations and activities in the shea industry.

He added that 370 tricycles and Personal Protective Equipment (PPEs) had also been provided for the women shea cooperatives to enhance

their operations and safety.

"We have a 100 per cent increase in productivity for women in shea collection and aggregation with an average of two to four bags of shea," Mr Adu said.

He pointed out that the programme was based on three

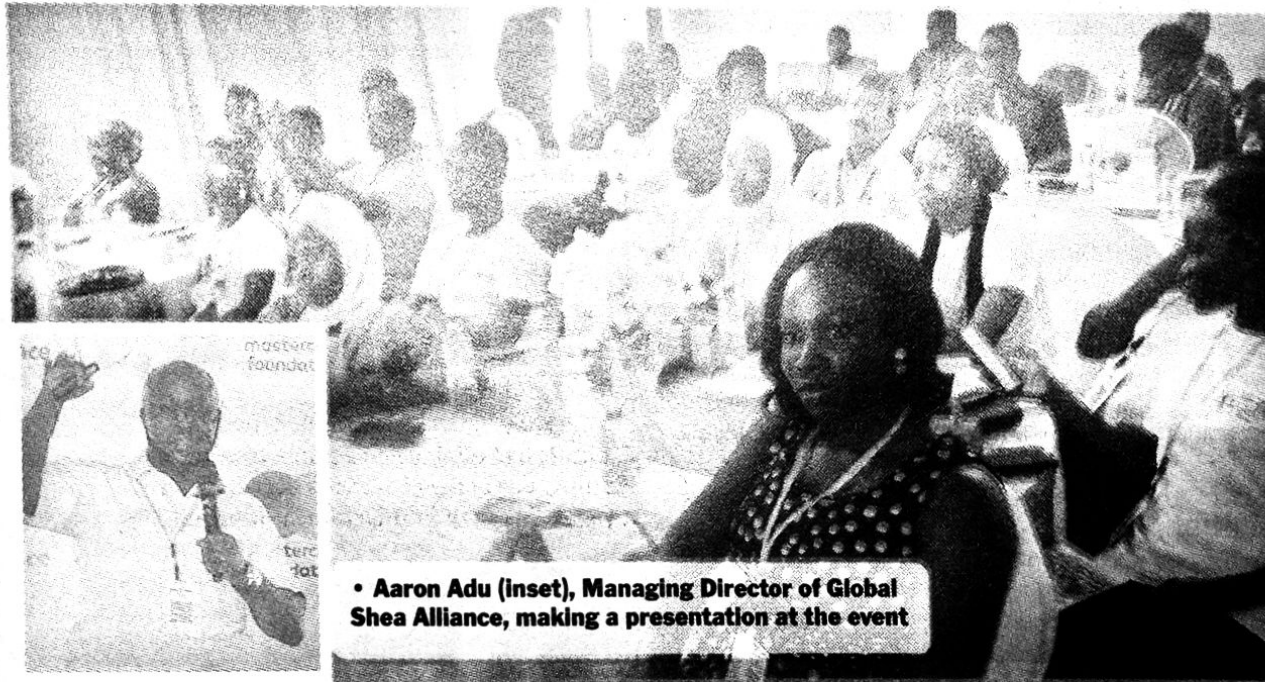
pillars which included increased aggregation and financial inclusion, formalised women-led cooperatives to operate as small businesses and increased income and market access and trade to ease the burden associated with the shea industry.

He intimated that the industry was dominated by old women and that the project had come to attract more young people.

Commendation

For his part, the Acting Head of Entrepreneurship Development at Mastercard Foundation, Gottfried Odamtten-Sowah, lauded the various partners for the successful implementation of the project.

He reiterated the Foundation's commitment to continue to work closely with various stakeholders to boost the shea industry and create jobs for the people, particularly women and youth.



• Aaron Adu (inset), Managing Director of Global Shea Alliance, making a presentation at the event

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