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The impact of the shea nut industry on women's empowerment in Burkina Faso

A multi-dimensional study focusing on the Central,
Central-West and Hauts-Bassins regions



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Foreword

Social protection is increasingly being adopted as a strategy for reducing poverty, food insecurity and vulnerability to shocks in developing countries. In parallel with the implementation of its five new Strategic Objectives, FAO has made social protection an important area of focus. Since 2014, the Organization has explored the topic of social protection for forest-dependent communities through a global literature review and country case studies.

This publication, developed in collaboration with Bright Futures, is based on a case study carried out in Burkina Faso on the socio-economic benefits derived from shea nuts and their impact on forest-dependent people's resilience, with a special focus on women's empowerment. Based on a survey of 183 women and 6 men, including 36 leaders of shea groups, the study looks at the impact of shea nuts in terms of income, assets and savings. It examines social indicators of well-being, education, health and living standards, as well as political implications, especially with regard to women's decision-making at home and at work, their participation in the shea value chain and their personal aspirations.

It is hoped that this report will be a valuable contribution to countries' efforts to promote social protection services for producer groups and to empower women.



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Acronyms

CECI	Centre for International Studies and Cooperation
CNC	National Framework for Consultation
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
FENAO CNC	National Federation of Professional Associations and the Shea Sector
NGO	non-governmental organization
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
USAID	United States Agency for International Development

Executive summary

Context

For centuries shea butter has been referred to as “women’s gold” because of its rich golden colour and because it provides employment, medicinal benefits and nutrition for millions of women across Africa.

The sector employs an estimated 3 million women across West Africa, generates between USD 90 million and USD 200 million a year from exports and promotes economic activity in communities, as recorded by the United States Agency for International Development in 2010. Despite these economic gains, it is not clear whether shea simply provides women with a source of income or whether it actually “empowers” them, as is often suggested. Is women’s economic, social and political well-being improved by their involvement in the shea industry?

An examination of women’s incomes and of their roles in the industry is required. A recent study in Burkina Faso found that 94 percent of the women sampled were involved solely in the collection of shea nuts, and 59 percent in the commercialization process [Pouliot, 2012], which shows that women’s participation in the more profitable parts of the shea value chain is limited.

The present study, which covered the Central, Hauts-Bassins and Central-West regions of Burkina Faso, included 189 participants from a sample of 36 shea butter groups chosen randomly from 1 069 registered shea groups and covering all elements in the shea value chain – collectors, transformers and traders.

Research objectives

With a view to guiding potential social protection, forestry and gender policies, this study examines: i) the economic resilience derived from shea nuts in terms of income, assets and savings; ii) social resilience in terms of household and gender dynamics, community relations, and social indicators of well-being, education, health and living standards; iii) the political implications, especially with regard to women’s decision-making at home and at work, participation in the shea value chain and personal aspirations; and iv) women’s social, economic, and political vulnerabilities. It also examines women’s vulnerability and the challenges they face in the shea industry, particularly the factors influencing women’s ability to access more lucrative activities in the value chain.

Main findings

The Burkina Faso shea sector contributes to women’s economic well-being with an average of CFA 530 000 [USD 892] per actor per year. But the average income is skewed in that 33 percent of the women involved make less than CFA 100 000 [USD 171] per year, 50 percent earn less than CFA 200 000 [USD 342] per year and 25 percent earn more than CFA 480 000 [USD 821] per year.

The shea sector is relatively well organized, even though it may appear otherwise at times, especially to outsiders. The four main categories of actors or market groups include: grassroots organizations, unions representing a number of groups in urban areas, traders, and processing industries.

The actors who profit the most are those involved in all stages of shea butter production, who have an average annual income of CFA 686 136 [USD 1 174]. In the sample, 50 percent of men were positioned in this role as leaders of their groups; they earned 44 times the income of women leaders because only men occupy the more profitable sections of the value chain: half controlled all aspects of shea production, and half were traders of shea nuts or derivatives.

Only 23.8 percent of women received an income solely from shea; 6.5 percent supplemented their income from agriculture, 30.3 percent from small-scale business and 30.8 percent from hand-made or non-industrial work.

Of the women surveyed, 75.9 percent said that their financial situation had improved with

participation in a shea butter group and that the principal destination of the revenue was their children's education, on which annual expenditure was approximately CFA 123 446 [USD 208].

With regard to the ways in which women used their income and the extent of their control over spending it, 14.3 percent said that their husbands always consulted them on the use of the money, 74.4 percent that they were sometimes consulted and 11.3 percent that they were never consulted. This shows that most women have some control over the money they earn and are able to make decisions on spending it.

Asked how they mitigate financial shocks, 48.6 percent of respondents said they primarily used their savings from shea and 31.3 percent that they sought help from family or friends. Hitherto there has never been a social protection programme in Burkina Faso to help women to mitigate shocks.

The individuals who profit most from the shea industry are group leaders, who earn three times more than the average woman worker. A manager's average annual income is CFA 1 332 [USD 2 278]. Of the 36 groups sampled, 11.1 percent had men as leaders.

In general women identified social rather than financial advantages deriving from membership of a shea group. In interviews, women claimed that the groups "opened their minds" to learning new skills and expressed appreciation of the opportunity to collaborate with other women. The groups acted as a social outlet for women, who could discuss issues that might be affecting them at home. Women felt that earning their own income was important in that they could pay for household items and that they felt more respected by others.

The most common vulnerabilities affecting women were lack of schooling and literacy, cultural barriers – women need permission from husbands to work and travel – and lack of confidence with regard to taking financial risks, because men were more likely to take out loans and take risks.

The main challenge identified by all female participants was the hard work associated with processing nuts into butter and the lack of processing machinery.

Among leaders of groups, 48.6 percent identified their main challenge as lack of technology, 25.7 percent as limited access to credit and 14.3 percent as limited access to international markets.

Women's main aspirations involved obtaining credit for their projects and investing in social protection measures such as education for their children and health insurance.

Moving forward

There is a need to increase alliances or joint ventures between groups to enhance communication and the regular dissemination of selling prices, and to increase the bargaining power of small-scale sellers compared with major buyers.

A government-sponsored regional or national structure should be set up to provide globally recognized certification or accreditation and increase the visibility of the national product to international buyers. Leaders of shea groups emphasized the need to provide more affordable and accessible accreditation to enable them to compete in the international market.

Increased access to savings and loans programmes would enable shea collectors to store the product and reduce the incidence of distressed sales, and would support the acquisition of technology that would enable women to capture the more profitable segments of the value chain. Investment in literacy, mentoring and business programmes for women in the sector would also support this aim.

Social protection programmes should be established and promoted to the groups, or an overall structure offering health, family, educational and financial services that would help to mitigate financial, social and environmental shocks.

1. Introduction

1.1. Context of the study

The 1992 Rio de Janeiro Earth Summit called on countries and development partners to more attention to the world's non-timber forest products and take action as necessary. The Government of Burkina Faso accordingly developed a plan of action for the promotion of non-timber forest products in the country and created the Promotion of Non-Timber Forest Products Agency, which has since collaborated with technical and financial partners on programmes such as the Improvement of Income and Food Security Project.

Studies have recognized the importance of non-timber forest products in terms of the financial and livelihood significance for rural households in developing countries [Pouliot, 2012; Babulo *et al.*, 2009; Cavendish, 2000; Fisher, 2004]. Besides securing incomes for individuals, non-timber forest products constitute a source of revenue for small-scale and medium-scale forest enterprises that process shea and carry out related imports and exports. Some non-timber forest products have significant cultural value; others have medicinal functions that contribute to the health and well-being of many communities.

Shea is an important non-timber forest product in Burkina Faso because of its medicinal properties, nutritional uses and income-generating potential. It contributes to export earnings – it is the third most exported product – creates income for women, especially in rural areas, and shea butter groups enable women to acquire new skills, receive support from other women and promote women's agency and collective action. It is estimated that about 50 percent of the production of shea nuts is consumed in producer countries: between 57 percent [Lovett, 2004b] and 41 percent [United States Agency for International Development [USAID], 2010]. The West African region currently exports between 265 000 and 445 000 tonnes of shea per year [Yinug and Fetzer, 2008].

Approximately 3 million women are employed in the shea sector in West Africa and the industry generates between USD 90 million and USD 200 million per year in sales of shea nuts and exports of shea butter. This illustrates that shea has considerable potential in terms of contributing to the economic empowerment of women through the creation of enterprises and jobs, particularly through interventions in the development of the value chain. At the macro level, the industry stimulates other parts of the economy: a study by USAID [2010] suggested that USD 1 000 in household income associated with the collection of shea generates USD 1 580 in economic activity in the community.

Since early 1990 various interventions have targeted women as major beneficiaries of shea butter programmes [see Annex] with a view to combating poverty and promoting women's economic development. Many non-governmental organizations [NGOs] have promoted the shea industry as a tool to help empower women and increase their financial independence: examples include Root Capital, Shea Yeleen and Lulu Life. But despite these economic gains, it is not clear whether shea simply provides women with a source of income or whether the industry actually "empowers" them, as is often claimed. Positive financial results do not necessarily correspond to increased capabilities or empowerment [Nussbaum, 2000; Sen, 1999]. The concept of empowerment is complex because increased capability in one area can potentially have negative effects in another: a woman can earn a steady income that improves her livelihood, for example, but this might disrupt the gender dynamics at home and she may be verbally abused

by her husband. A holistic approach that examines the several spheres of women's lives can provide more accurate information as to the workings of the sector.

Studies have examined the impact of fair trade certification [Lovett, 2004a], traditional processing methods and traditional utilization [Abbiw, 1990; 1996], industry investment opportunities [USAID, 2010] and the contribution to women's livelihoods [Pouliot, 2012]. Much of the literature makes reference to women's financial gains, but there is a gap in terms of a multi-dimensional perspective on the effects of the industry on women's lives, their roles in the sector, the challenges they encounter and their aspirations as individual entrepreneurs and for the industry at large. These are important issues when it comes to developing policy.

In the attempt to inform policy and empower women in the shea sector, social protection can be a tool for reducing poverty, promoting women's economic empowerment and reducing gender inequalities. So far there are no social protection programmes specifically for women in the Burkina Faso shea sector or for vulnerable women who rely on non-timber forest products. Research and shea projects need to link poverty reduction with social protection schemes to promote women's empowerment, entrepreneurship and overall well-being.

1.2. The shea sector in Burkina Faso

Shea (*Vitellaria paradoxa*), the "butter tree" or "women's green gold", grows in the wild on a 5 000 km strip in the wooded savannahs of West and East Africa – the "shea belt". The shea tree only grows in Benin, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Central African Republic, Chad, Côte d'Ivoire, Ethiopia, Ghana, Guinea Bissau, Guinea, Mali, Niger, Nigeria, Senegal, Sierra Leone, South Sudan, Sudan, Togo, The Democratic Republic of the Congo and Uganda. Shea butter is part of the cultures of peoples of different areas and provides livelihoods for many. Almost everything from the shea tree – fruit, nuts, leaves, bark, roots and dead wood – is used for purposes ranging from food, pharmaceutical products, soaps and cosmetics.

The socio-economic role of shea

Shea activities provide incomes for women mainly but few for men: they range from the collection of nuts, to making raw shea butter for consumption and treating shea butter for creams, pomades and cosmetics. Shea is Burkina Faso's third export product after cotton and livestock products, and for this reason it has an important socio-cultural role and is also a critical element in the national economy. In Burkina Faso, the sector contributed CFA 10 billion [USD 17 million] through nut sales in 2012 [Rousseau *et al.*, 2015] and currently employs an estimated 1.5 million in the shea chain [Palmieri 2012]. At the end of 2013, the price of shea nuts was 250 CFA francs per kilogram [Rousseau *et al.*, 2015].

The processing of shea butter is a social and cultural event that brings women together, usually for the common purpose of generating income; there are often meetings, songs and dances to celebrate. One of the main findings of this study was that women felt significant social empowerment from belonging to shea groups. The social benefits of the industry have tended to be overlooked in other reports and studies.

A large proportion of butter is used for local consumption, making it an important source of food and hence of food security. Of the estimated 600 000 tonnes of shea nuts harvested in West Africa, 350 000 tonnes are exported, mostly as raw nuts; the remaining 250 000 tonnes are processed and consumed locally and are not part of the trade market [USAID, 2010]. Of the 36 associations sampled, 36 percent sell to the international market, 33 percent to the local market, 13.9 percent to other shea groups, 13.9 percent to national markets and 0.3 percent to the French company Occitane. In terms of production, 27.8 percent of groups produce more than 100 tonnes of nuts a year, and 9 percent between 5 tonnes and 50 tonnes. Butter production varies among the sampled groups: 9.4 percent produce less than 1 tonnes, 15.6 percent between 1 tonnes and 5 tonnes, 15.6 percent between 10 tonnes and 15 tonnes, 18.8 percent between 50 tonnes and 100 tonnes and 12.5 percent more than 100 tonnes. This wide variation can be attributed mainly to

group size the technological resources available.

Poverty of women in the shea sector

Shea provides a vital source of income for Burkinabé women and can improve the livelihoods of women and their families. The women involved in the shea sector are usually poor in terms of the international poverty line of USD 1.90/day. Of the women participants in this study, 50 percent earned less than CFA 200 000 [USD 341] per year, and fewer than 36 percent are literate. Women's incomes are low and instable because they depend on the availability of nuts and ability to sell the products. Women in the sector are vulnerable to issues such as climate change, increasing prices of nuts, lack of opportunity for personal and entrepreneurial growth, and poverty.

Shea has been used as a poverty reduction tool: the United Nations Development Programme, for example, sponsored a project in northern Ghana that helped 600 000 women to identify the marketable qualities of shea butter, explore new markets, learn business management skills for groups and teach shea butter production skills and techniques to local women. The shea sector can give poor and vulnerable women opportunities to improve their livelihoods and the living standards of their households. This can be accomplished if: i) the sector is well organized and advocates for women; ii) women are offered fair prices for their work and products; iii) there are opportunities for growth and learning; and iv) women can participate in decision-making processes.

1.3. Objectives

This study addresses two main questions: i) to what extent does the shea butter industry affect women's social, economic and political empowerment? ii) Why are women not represented in the most profitable areas of the shea value chain? It highlights some of the benefits of belonging to a shea organization and the challenges in the industry that affect women with a view to contributing to the literature and offering recommendations as to enhancing women's overall empowerment.

Many studies of the shea sector address issues related to the value chain and the sector's contribution to the national economy – but the social, political and cultural empowerment of women is not sufficiently developed. Greater understanding of the ways in which shea contributes to women's economic empowerment rather than just to income is needed: hence when it came to adopting empowerment indicators for this study, the literature review had to be adapted to the shea industry and the national context.

1.4. Empowerment as a framework

There has been considerable debate among scholars, development practitioners and feminists with regard to defining and measuring empowerment. Kabeer [2001] defines empowerment as "... the expansion in people's ability to make strategic life choices in a context where this ability was previously denied to them" and makes a distinction between vital lifestyle choices and those of secondary importance. In the first category there are the choices of occupation, place to live, marriage and if so with whom, having children and if so how many, and the freedom to move and choose one's friends. These critical decisions determine each person's lifestyle, or at least the kind of life one desires to lead. Other less critical choices determine one's quality of life. The choices leading to empowerment are based on the three dimensions of resources, action and individual performance capability.

Bennett [2002] differentiates between empowerment and social inclusion by emphasizing that empowerment is a bottom-up process in which people assign accountability to the institutions that influence them, whereas social inclusion is a top-down process occurring when institutional barriers are removed and incentives are put in place to increase access by individuals and groups to available opportunities. In an attempt to find a consensus, Narayan [2002] reviewed 45 studies of women's empowerment in which the recurring themes were: options, choice, control, power, ability to affect one's well-being and ability to make strategic life choices. The challenge is to take these themes and transform them into indicators that can measure women's empowerment.

To address this problem Oxfam conducted a three-year study of attempts to conceptualize and measure empowerment (Bishop and Bowman, 2014); the indicators were refined each year and finally included: i) the ability to make decisions; ii) self-perception; iii) personal freedom; iv) access to and control over resources; and v) support from social networks.

These Oxfam indicators and studies and the questionnaires used were taken into account in the design of this study, which would ideally have included a range of indicators. Time and budget constraints, however, meant that the emphasis was placed on: i) socio-demographic indicators; ii) health and physical integrity; iii) literacy and education levels; iv) economic participation and rights; v) political participation and rights; and vi) cultural participation and rights.

2. Methods

This study employed the four steps listed below.

1. Preliminary meeting on context and scope

A preliminary meeting with four national consultants, an international consultant and the country representative of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) enabled the team to discuss the research objectives with the FAO country representative and gain insight from previous projects on shea butter or women's empowerment.

2. Literature review

The team studied the history of the sector, the actors involved and the regulatory policies and measures relating to non-timber forest products in Burkina Faso. Various shea groups and actors were contacted to enhance understanding of the functioning of the industry.

3. Fieldwork

This step involved the creation of questionnaires, training for the seven data collectors, data collection in three regions, checking the questionnaires for errors and following up with participants if there were inconsistencies or mistakes in their responses.

Two types of questionnaire were developed: i) individual questionnaires including open and closed questions to discover how well-being had changed or not since starting work in the shea sector; and ii) questionnaires for group leaders to understand the workings of the group or organization in terms of issues such as financing, credit history and challenges. Both questionnaires included quantitative and qualitative types of questions.

The intention was to include all types of associations, unions and companies along the value chain of collectors, processors and traders. Rural and urban groups were sampled, but their locations were limited to their roles: groups involved in trading, for instance, are normally located in the capital because of the commercial and transport opportunities.

4. Validation meeting

The participants involved in the survey met at the FAO country office to validate the results and recommendations of the report.

Excel and SPSS 20.0 were used to code, enter and analyse data. The limitations of this study are related to the representativeness of the sample: the allocated budget meant that the sample size did not statistically represent the entire county. Nonetheless, a good idea was obtained of what is currently happening in the sector and of women's experiences. With regard to challenges faced during the study, the fact that most respondents were illiterate constrained the administration of questionnaires; this was overcome by breaking down the questions for women and explaining their meaning during interviews.

2.1. The sample

The sample consisted of 189 individuals and 36 leaders selected after determining the number of shea groups (see Table 1): 89 participants investigated in Central region, 50 in Central West region and 50 in Hauts-Bassins region. Data collection focused on rural areas and accounted for 105 of the 189 individuals in the sample.

Table 1: Distribution of the sample by zone and type of locality

Zone	Urban	Rural	Total
Central	18	71	89
Central West	48	2	50
Hauts-Bassins	18	32	50
Total	84	105	189

Source: Fieldwork in 2015.

The sampling base consisted of a set of groups and associations from urban and rural areas representing different roles in the value chain. The choice of the Ouagadougou area was based on its function as a distribution hub; the other two zones – Koudougou/Reo and Bobo/Koudougou – were chosen for their specialization in the collection and processing of shea nuts.

The sample base of actors was chosen from a list of registered shea groups. It was narrowed down by location and access to the groups. The sampling rate was 47 percent; the weighting of each region in the database stratified it. The sample was determined by using a table of random numbers, which resulted in 36 groups.

Table 2: Distribution of the actors according to location and function

Function in the value chain	Central: Kadiogo	Central-West: Boulkiemde	Central-West: Sanguie	Hauts-Bassins: Houet	Total
Collectors	1	0	0	1	2
Traders	1	3	2	3	9
Collectors and nut transformers	3	0	0	5	8
Collectors and transformers of nuts and butter	11	2	3	1	17
Total	16	5	5	10	36

Source: Fieldwork in 2015.

2.2. The global value chain and the main actors

There have been major changes in the global shea value chain in recent years, increasing in exports and price due to a growing demand. The main buyer for shea is CBE – for “cocoa butter equivalent” – industries because it has similar chemical and physical properties to cocoa butter but costs less. CBE industries account for 90 percent of total shea exports from West Africa [Rousseau *et al.*, 2015] and the cosmetic and pharmaceutical industries absorb the rest [Lovett, 2004; Yinug and Fetzer, 2008]. Between 2000 and 2005, the global CBE market increased by 29 percent [Reynolds, 2010; Yinug and Fetzer, 2008]. In 2001, 95 percent of exported shea was in the form of raw nuts and 5 percent accounted for crude shea butter in West Africa [Rousseau *et al.*, 2015]. With regard to the cosmetic industry, exports of shea are estimated to have increased from 200 tonnes/year in 1994 to 1 500 tonnes/year in 2003 [Lovett, 2004]. The shea value chain in Burkina Faso, in particular, is a pyramidal supply chain [Rousseau *et al.*, 2015]. Exports are controlled by a handful of large manufacturers including AAK, IOI Loders Croklaan and 3F, which alone

accounted for an estimated 95 percent of the buying market share for export [USAID, 2010].

In Burkina Faso there are four types of actor in the shea value chain: they function individually, in combination, in groups and in unions.

1. Nut collectors

Collectors are usually women and children engaged solely in the collection of shea nuts. They collect nuts from fields or buy them from farmers and resell them to women's groups or to secondary nut sellers. In this group, all women accounted for 17.5 percent of the sample.

2. Nut collectors and transformers

These actors collect nuts and also participate in the transformation of the nuts into butter. Women often keep some of the butter for their households to eat. These groups sell their butter and derivative products at local markets, or to national or international traders. In this group, all women accounted for 39.7 percent of the sample.

3. Nut and butter collectors and transformers

These actors are present in all areas of the value chain. They lead within the collection and also transform shea nuts into products such as shea butter, soap and pomade. This group accounted for 42 percent of the total sample.

4. Traders

Traders do not usually specialize in a particular product: they sell raw nuts, shea butter or products such as cosmetics and soap, passing from product to product according to availability and demand. Traders are mostly men because the job can require travel and women are required to stay close to the family and home. They are located all over the country. Traders normally sell their products internationally: this constitutes another barrier for many women who generally lack the confidence, knowledge and ability to work with international buyers. This group accounted for 1.6 percent of the sample.

There is a gender trend in the location of men and women in the value chain: for example 50 percent of the men in the sample occupied all parts of the value chain, and the other 50 percent were traders of butter, nuts or derivative products. Although men accounted for only 2.6 percent of the sample, they were located in the most profitable areas of the value chain.

2.3. Main groupings of actors in the shea sector

The shea sector is reasonably well organized, though it may appear to be disorganized at times, especially to outsiders. The four main groupings in the Burkinabé market are grassroots groups, unions representing a number of groups in urban areas, traders, and local processing industries or companies.

Grassroots organizations

In the early 1980s, the Ministry for Agriculture of Burkina Faso encouraged rural communities to set up a consortium to facilitate the organization of this vital sector of the economy. Villages were encouraged to form groups, therefore, groups of women involved in the collection, processing and preservation of the nuts and production of shea butter were formed – the grassroots organizations. The products are for local consumption and for export: harvesting shea fruit remains a secondary activity for rural populations, whose main activity is agriculture. The number of households in Burkina Faso collecting shea nuts is at least 646 000. There are currently 1 069 registered professional organizations involved in the collection, processing and marketing of shea kernels: they can be organized in various ways, their objectives and the division of their profits also vary. In some groups women work together, but sell their products separately; in others the work and the profits are shared.

Unions

The second type of shea grouping consists of groups joined together as unions. These groups join a union by affinity, proximity or as a result of union interest. Unions are structured to respond to market demands. The primary goal is to find markets for their members and export butter. The unions handle large orders for butter, with each member contributing in proportion to its production capacity. The head of the union organizes the distribution of orders among its members, centralizes butter collection, manages shipments in accordance with regulations and pays the supplier members. The unions also help to increase their groups' ability to satisfy a demanding market: one group, for example, may have an international order but does not have bio-certification, so they team up with another group that has such certification and share the profits.

Private companies

There are shea companies that focus solely on marketing their products and making a profit. There is usually no social element such as grassroots organizations involved. These shea companies are organized in the usual way with an owner, manager and salaried employees, with the result that most of the profits accrue to the management and not to women workers.

2.4. Profile of the participants

All organizations involved in collecting, processing and sales of shea have a head person responsible for its activities: the manager directs the unit, manages the expenses of production, training and the acquisition of production equipment, and decides the time and place of sales according to market price expectations. Because the manager controls the activities of the production unit, managerial behaviour characteristics must be examined: age, educational level, gender and marital status of those in the sample were analysed at the provincial and global levels. The issues addressed were the type of people at the top of the chain, conflicts of interest in and among organizations in the sector, and analysis of the demographics of the respondents.

Gender

The members of these organizations were 96.8 percent women, and 89 percent of the managers were women. Men are mostly found in segments with high added value such as the marketing of derivative products or in organizations that occupy every aspect of the value chain from collection to transformation into derivatives. In these areas of the shea chain there are more women than men, but they earn significantly less than men for the same activity. Men that work in all parts of the value chain, for example, earn 44 times more than their women peers.

Table 3: Distribution of participants according to position and gender (%)

Status of the organization in the value chain	Gender of managers		Gender of members	
	Men	Women	Men	Women
Collectors	0	100	6	94
Traders of secondary products	22	78	0	100
Collectors and producers of nuts	0	100	3	97
Collectors and producers of nuts and butter	12	88	3	97

Source: Fieldwork in 2015.

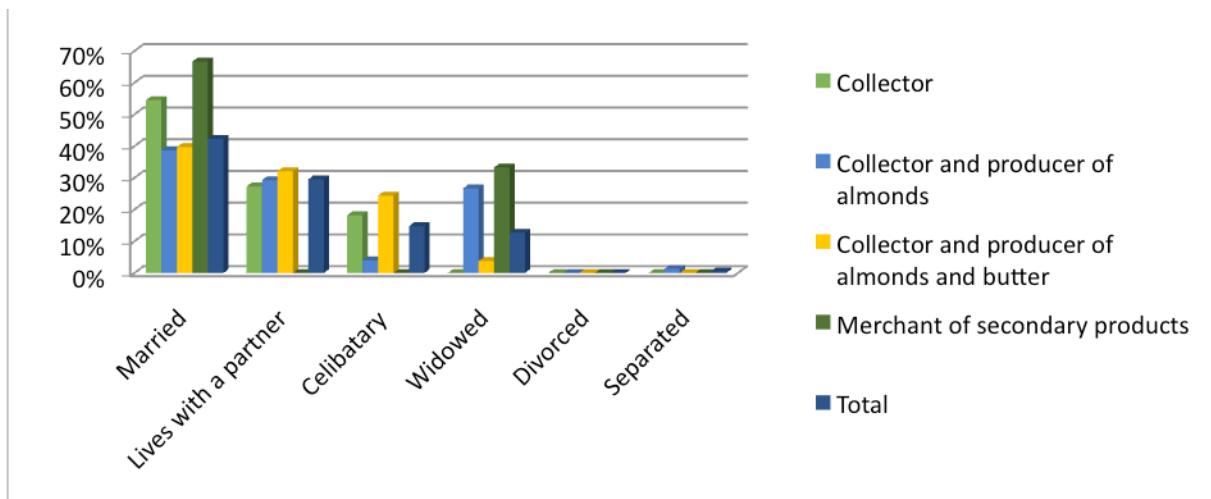
Age

The average age of group managers in the study was 52, with a provincial disparity ranging from 38 to 64. Younger leaders, mainly collectors and almond and butter processors in the Boukhiemdé, have an average age of 38; leaders in the capital region, mainly collectors, had average age of 64. Of the individuals sampled, the average age was 43.

Marital status

The marital status of the leader can influence the choice of production and spending. Of the sample, 42 percent were married, 29.6 percent lived with a partner, 14.8 percent were single, 12.7 percent widowed and 0.5 percent separated. Of the collectors, 81.8 percent lived with a partner as if they were married. Of the nut collectors and processors 68 percent were in a partnership, and 26.7 percent were widows. Of the traders, 66.7 percent were married and 33.3 percent were widows. It is understood that when a person declares that they live with a partner it is because they live in a polygamous household. Age at marriage has a definite effect on the level of women's education. Of the sampled individuals, 24 percent were married at 17, 19 percent at 20, 15 percent at 18 and 3 percent at 15.

Graph 1
Marital status of respondents based on primary activity



Source: Fieldwork in 2015.

3. Background of the shea sector

3.1. History of interventions in the shea sector

There have been numerous intervention in the shea sector (see Annex) that can be organized into two major periods: i) between 1964 and 1991, interventions related to the state monopoly of the sector; and ii) after 1991, with the liberalization of the economy, the state was separated from production and marketing and private actors and their projects and programmes supported the management of the sector.

State monopoly (1964-1991)

The history of interventions and support in the shea sector has been influenced by external factors, mainly European interest in the product. The other attractive quality of the sector was its economic possibilities in terms of generating revenue for the country and providing income for collectors, traders, and processors.

Before 1975 the shea trade – mainly the nuts – was a monopoly ruled by the Caisse de Stabilization department, which at that time was responsible for assessing the potential of harvests, collecting information to assess the purchase price of nuts according to international prices, accrediting exporters wishing to collect and export nuts, checking exporters' contracts and establishing producers' prices. During this period the office also controlled the almond industry. Management of the sector, which focused exclusively on shea kernels, had three systems:

1. Contract control (1974–1975)

Under this system the department did not strictly speaking have the monopoly of buying and exporting shea. It was mainly responsible for registering traders who collected and exported shea and it controlled the contracts awarded by accredited dealers, which enabled it to obtain an overview of the market and assess pay-outs and support where the price of shea was set by this institution.

2. Export monopoly (1976–1978)

During this period, Burkina Faso was able to export large quantities of nuts.

3. Adjusted monopoly (1978–1991)

The export monopoly system was unable to provide cohesion among merchants, so from 1978 the state was obliged to develop another system. This ran until 1991 and involved setting a purchase price for the nut collectors, overseeing purchases made by traders from groups financed by the department, deploying agents to monitor collection from groups, preventing fraudulent exports and authorizing traders to export if they delivered a portion of their profits to the department.

The liberalized system (1991–present)

Since 1991 the Government of Burkina Faso has disengaged from the functions of production, processing and marketing and placed them in the hands of private professional organizations. As a result, the shea trade is increasingly liberalized. The shea producers, traders and exporters, assisted by NGOs, with the support and guidance of the state, currently manage the activities of the sector.

Despite its withdrawal the state still prioritizes promotion of the shea sector, especially with regard to national policies. The main areas of concern relate to support for technological development, the development of markets and quality of the product.

Support for technological development

This was the result of development partner's desire to support development of the shea sector by investing in butter extraction technologies. The resulting butter would have more value and hence be more cost efficient, and it would be sold at better prices for the women. This is the era of micro-projects and other income-generating activities.

Support for market development and product quality

This includes the promotion of income-generating activities for women in the production and marketing of shea and its products, with support in the form of training, marketing equipment and access to the necessary structures. Since the late 1980s, projects and programmes have promoted a variety of support policies in the sector.

3.2. Attempts to organize the sector formally

In June 1998 the National Framework for Consultation (CNC) for the shea sector was created with the objective to seek durable ways to:

- improve the quality of nuts;
- promote shea products;
- secure markets for products and sell at the best price;
- obtain information about regional, national and international markets;
- enhance the capacity of sector stakeholders to defend their interests; and
- improve the organization of the sector to enhance control of activities.

In 2000 the CNC was to become the National Federation of Professional Associations and the Shea Sector (FENAO CNC) with support from the Centre for International Studies and Cooperation (CECI) and funding from the European Union. Together they were to work on implementation of the Council of Oilseeds of Burkina Faso to bring all peanut, cashew, shea butter and sesame actors together. The CNC-FENAO would be the main representative for shea actors in Burkina Faso.

But FENAO was dissolved before it could implement anything of importance for the benefit of the sector and in February 2000 the Table Filière Karité was created, in which each part of the shea chain was represented, with the following objectives:

- establish permanent dialogue with all operators in the Burkina Faso shea sector;
- harmonize interventions in the sector through a development plan drafted and amended by sector actors;
- increase the incomes of sector actors through promotional activities; and
- improve the organization of the sector and the dissemination of information to all actors.

The Table Filière Karité is still a plan and has yet to be implemented. One of the challenges is that women feel poorly represented in that despite the fact that they number 600,000, their individual voices cannot be heard in such a large structure, even though independent associations represent them. Indeed, their designated representatives in the professional organizations represent the other partners, which poses a problem of recognition with regard to women's organizations in the shea industry.

The challenges of decentralization

Since the disengagement of the state, the shea industry is still a sector without a true strategic direction that is recognized by all actors, in spite of the several attempts to rectify the situation.

The essential question is whether the sector suffers from poor organization or a lack of recognition by the organizations of actors that represent it? Most of the unions and collectives are not structured to represent producers and function more like private companies. For this reason they use their networks to secure regular supplies and obtain assistance and subsidies. Their relations with the basic organizations are more like business connections than cooperative or associative relations.

The state was present in the sector from 1964 to 1991: actors were accustomed to its assistance and interventions and a deep-rooted dependence was created. From 1990 the organizations became responsible for their sector, but lacked the organizational and financial means. The abrupt loss of support led to doubts as to whether the state had disengaged too quickly and its responsibilities in the current situation of the sector.

The situation remains unclear, with many small groups and grassroots organizations left financially and technically vulnerable. It is evident that responsibilities and expectations must be made clear, because the sector still expects state intervention, especially economic subsidies and credits.

3.3. Unmet economic potential

Whatever the level or the form of groups or unions, they have not managed to rise to their full economic potential. This is because of: i) their nature and structure – the groups function as associations with no profit goal but with social objectives such as reducing poverty; they expect financial assistance, they are not entrepreneurial entities offering products and they have no market strategy; and ii) weak involvement of the actors and the absence of entrepreneurship – in general it is not the actors who make decisions: the current structure and the ways in which programmes are carried out limit the roles and responsibilities of women, who often find themselves waiting passively until the project in question connects them with the markets; and because there is little investment in women's skills, their chances of entrepreneurship are hindered.

4. Social protection measures

History of social protection in Burkina Faso

Since its independence from France in 1960, Burkina Faso has emphasized social insurance, safety nets and social services. Social protection has become a high priority as a result of internal and external crises such as political problems in Côte d'Ivoire, food scarcity, energy deficits and the global economic crisis. Dialogue on social protection, which started in 2001, led to the 2003 report *Politique nationale de protection sociale au Burkina Faso*, and from 2004 to 2009 there were ten social safety net programmes launched by various agencies and mostly led by the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and the World Bank. There are currently no social protection programmes specifically for women in the shea sector.

These programmes and projects reflect the country's interest in social safety nets. The main challenge is that none of these attempts has coordinated a national effort to establish social protection measures. To unite national efforts in fighting poverty and improving social protection measures, the Burkinabé Council of Ministers adopted the *Politique nationale de protection sociale* and its plan of action in September 2012. This action allocated a permanent government official to oversee future social protection programmes and coordinate with partners and stakeholders. In May 2014 all groups were asked for ideas as to identifying vulnerable groups in Burkina Faso, creating appropriate methods and assessment tools, and formulating a plan of action that includes social protection programmes for different groups.

Social insurance

In Burkina Faso public-sector employees receive a pension on retirement; if death occurs before retirement, the family is paid whatever sum was contributed. This is organized by the *Caisse autonome de retraite des fonctionnaires*. Employees do not receive any other social protection benefits. There are ongoing discussions at the national level with a view to starting a national insurance programme for public-sector employees that would include health insurance for themselves and their immediate family, but it is not yet operational.

Private-sector workers can obtain insurance from their employer or individually from insurance providers, particularly the *Caisse nationale de sécurité sociale*. Coverage varies according to how much an individual or company can afford each month. Schemes normally cover old-age pensions, disability, widows' benefits, occupational hazards and family allowances.

For individuals working in the informal sector monthly income can vary, and people often cannot afford to commit to a set amount each month. To avoid this obstacle, some people choose to give their daily savings to a third party who saves it for them, takes a fee at the end of the month and returns the rest. This is typically done because banks will not allow small deposits. A woman who sells fruit and vegetables at a market stall, for example, might earn CFA 1 000 [USD 1.70] per day and will set aside CFA 500 [USD 1] to give to a "saver"; at the end of the month the saver pays her CFA 15 000 [USD 30] but will take CFA 3 000 [USD 6] as a fee. The woman can now go to an insurance provider and pay her monthly premium.

Another informal method of obtaining some social protection benefits is called *totine*. Women's groups usually use it: all members contribute a sum each month and take turns using the entire group contribution. A group of ten women contribute CFA 10 000 [USD 2] a month, for example, and at the end of the month one member takes CFA 100 000 CFA [USD 200] to invest or to buy items she needs. This method helps women to access large sums more quickly and helps to mitigate financial shocks.

Of the sampled groups, 22.2 percent received a loan of between CFA 1.5 million and CFA 3.0 million [USD 3 000 to USD 6 000], and 46 percent had some sort of social protection measure. Specifically, 11.1 percent received *Caisse nationale de sécurité sociale*, a private insurance system in which each woman pays a monthly *premium*; 16.7 percent received a *mutuelle*, an informal savings scheme; and 13.9 percent received *Caisse de menu dépense*, a savings scheme to enable the purchase of items for work.

Health

Healthcare and medication are not free in Burkina Faso, but the Government subsidizes essential medical services and medications to ensure equitable access. Childbirth, for example, costs CFA 900 [USD 1.80] at public maternity centres, which most people can afford. Generic medication for malaria and HIV, condoms and birth-control pills can be obtained from the nurses at *dispensaires*. Those with limited means use this service. People with a serious condition can obtain care at public clinics and hospitals. Those who can afford CFA 20 000 [USD 40] can visit a doctor at a private clinic.

Food and agriculture

Farmers and other actors dependent on the land have no social protection measures. There is a fund to which people can apply as a group to receive a government cash allocation to ease financial problems, but this is a case-by-case system that depends on the availability of funds. The Government does, however, operate a price limit for essentials such as milk, sugar and rice.

Welfare services

Support for welfare services is the responsibility of the *Ministère de l'action sociale et de la solidarité nationale*, which organizes awareness campaigns, provides assistance for the disabled and delivers services for refugees and people in difficult circumstances. Many NGOs and decentralized structures are also involved in welfare services.

Employment services

The National Employment Policy adopted in 2006 set the goal of increasing opportunities for employment, especially for young women and young men entering the job market, with a view to reducing poverty. This policy promotes access to employment through vocational training and facilitates the transition from training to the job market. The Fund of Support to Youth Initiatives, the Informal Sector Support Fund, the Support Fund for Promotion of Employment, and the Support Fund for Vocational Training and Learning were set up for this purpose.

Despite Burkina Faso's efforts to create social safety nets, UNICEF and the World Bank (2010) have identified remaining challenges: i) pilot programmes and projects have been uncoordinated; ii) many programmes only provide one-time support and are not sustainable; iii) there is no single way of identifying vulnerable groups, so projects are not standardized; and iv) programmes are dependent on foreign funds.

Table 4: Social protection interventions in Burkina Faso from 2004-2009

Programme	Agency	Type and no. of beneficiaries
Reduced food prices	Société nationale de gestion de stock de sécurité alimentaire; Conseil national de secours d'urgence et de réhabilitation	Populations in regions with food insecurity; 18 400 households in 2008
Food distribution	Catholic Relief Services	People vulnerable to HIV/AIDS; the elderly
Food and support for education and infrastructure	World Food Programme	30 800 women and 31 400 men in 18 provinces
Treatment of malnutrition	FAO; UNICEF; World Food Programme; Ministère de la santé	Vulnerable groups
School feeding programmes	Catholic Relief Services; Ministère de l'enseignement de base et de l'alphabétisation; Ministère des enseignements secondaires, supérieur et de la recherche scientifique; World Food Programme	All students benefit in principle, and all public schools are potential beneficiaries
Food and fuel subsidies	Conseil national de lutte contre le SIDA et les infections sexuellement transmissibles	Consumers of fuel and food products, mostly in large cities
Money transfers	Catholic Relief Services; World Food Programme; Ministère de l'action sociale et de la solidarité nationale; Red Cross Burkinabé	Vulnerable children in Nahouri and Sanmatenga; 3 250 households in the 2008–2010 pilot programme
Food coupons	Catholic Relief Services; World Food Programme; Ministère de l'action sociale et de la solidarité nationale; Red Cross Burkinabé	195 000 poor people in Ouagadougou and Bobo
Health subsidies and exemptions	Ministère de la santé; Fonds national de solidarité	A subsidy of 80% for childbirth at health clinics; exemptions for pregnant women and children under 5
Public works	Swiss Inter-Cooperation; Ministère des infrastructures et du désenclavement	NGO project in communities in four provinces in Eastern region

Source: Savadogo, 2010.

5. Social empowerment of women in the shea sector

Other studies have focused on the economic empowerment of women in the shea sector, but this paper highlights socio-cultural empowerment. Working in shea groups enables women to discuss their worries and act as sources of inspiration and encouragement for each other. The social and cultural context also concerns the family, the status of women, the age at which girls marry, the possibility of divorce and the freedom to choose a spouse.

5.1. Social resilience of women

Access to information provides knowledge and power for the individual. With regard to women's empowerment, their ability to access information is a major indicator of empowerment. For example, 59.7 percent of women learned about female genital mutilation through the radio, 17.7 percent through conversations with other women, 9.7 percent through intervention programmes, 5.9 percent through television and 2.7 percent from local activists. Of the women surveyed, 4.3 percent had been victims of this practice, a very low figure compared with the national average of 71.9 percent.¹

Obtaining independence enables women to acquire various capabilities: this is reflected in the change observed when women start work in the shea sector. Table 5 shows that having started work in the shea sector 19.7 percent of women stated that their financial independence had improved, 38.2 percent stated that membership of a shea group had opened their minds, and 24.3 percent said that their relationships with the community and other women had improved. Overall, 15.1 percent of women believed that their livelihoods had improved since starting work in the shea sector; in particular, 38.2 percent stated that they had more open minds for learning and 24.3 percent said they had improved their relationships with other women.

Table 5: The primary changes noted by women since joining a shea group (%)

	Changes reported			
	More financial independence	Better collaboration with other women	Improved standard of living and work experience	Opening of mind to learning
Production and transformation of nuts and butter	12.4	26.9	14.5	41.4
Commercialization of nuts and butter	26.7	13.3	20.0	40.0
Trade in various products	20.0	30.0	10.0	40.0
Total	19.7	24.3	15.1	38.2

Source: Fieldwork, 2015.

¹ See: <http://2001-2009.state.gov/g/wi/rls/rep/crfgm/10047.htm>

5.2. Social vulnerabilities

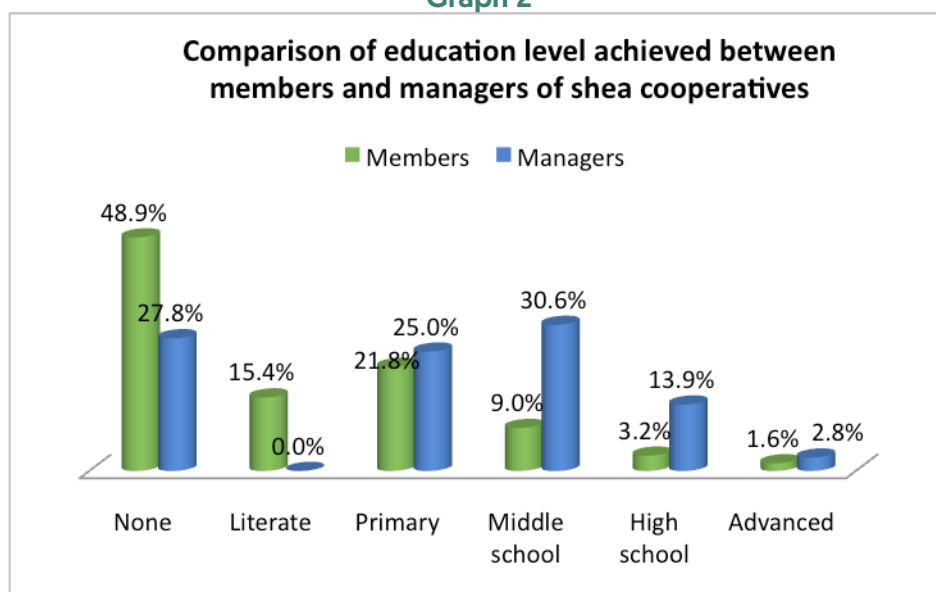
Education

Education is an essential factor in development because it improves the productivity of labour and is a major ingredient in individual socio-economic progress. This study found that the education level of women in the shea chain significantly influenced position and salary. Of the leaders of groups and associations, 72 percent were literate having completed at least primary schooling, 27.8 percent had no education, 25 percent had completed primary education, 30.6 percent had completed secondary education, 13.9 percent a second secondary cycle and 2.8 percent had been to college or university. If the leaders are excluded, fewer than 36 percent of women actors were literate.

The low literacy rate in the shea sector reflects the low national rate of 28.7 percent². Many men and women have not attended school before, especially in rural areas. Of the 39 women who had to leave school or had never attended, 46 percent said it was a matter of lack of finances, 38 percent cited social reasons and 13 percent cultural barriers. One woman recounted: "I had to leave school because my father didn't want to spend the money" (Questionnaire from fieldwork, 2015)³.

This study shows that a minimum of primary education improves women's chances of accessing more profitable areas of the business. There is still a significant chance that women without formal education can become group leaders, as reflected in the 27.8 percent of the sample who had achieved it. This success can be attributed to training programmes made available to women in the sector by the state and NGOs focusing on production, quality control, soap manufacture and organic processes.

Graph 2



Source: Fieldwork, 2015.

Physical and gender-based violence

With regard to physical violence, 10.9 percent of the women interviewed reported having been struck by their husband or partner to the point of injury. According to a study in 2010, 1 in 5 Burkinabé women from the age of 15 are victims of physical violence at home.⁴ It is important to mention that in this study participants were asked if they were ever physically hurt to the point of breaking bones. In Burkina Faso, a husband hitting his wife to discipline her is not always considered to be abuse or domestic violence. One woman wrote that her husband did not physically harm her because his violence was "... never to the point where I am hurt; he just

² See: http://www.unicef.org/infobycountry/burkinafaso_statistics.html

³ This questionnaire was the basis of data collection and analysis for this study.

⁴ <http://dhsprogram.com/pubs/pdf/FR256/FR256.pdf>

hits me with his hand” (Questionnaire, 2015). As seen in the same 2010 study, 44 percent of the women interviewed believed that a husband is justified in beating his wife for at least one of the reasons cited – burning the food, arguing, going out without his permission and refusing sex.

Female genital mutilation is a cultural practice that impedes the development of women, and work is being done to raise awareness and educate people as to why it should be stopped. In 1996, 66.4 percent of Burkinabé women were victims of female genital mutilation, but the rate had decreased to 25 percent in 2005.⁵ Despite the work to prevent female genital mutilation it still occurs, especially in rural areas. Of the women surveyed, 39.8 percent confirmed that excision had affected at least one of their relatives: this is significant especially because the practice is illegal. In any case, 96.2 percent of women believe that female genital mutilation must be stopped; only 0.5 percent considered that the practice should continue.

Gender/cultural restraints

In informal discussion women often stated that they had obtained the permission of their husband or partner to take on their job, and that permission would not be given to travel away from home or to cross international borders. These household gender barriers prevent women from exposure to other national or international shea businesses, and it limits the number of women who can access the more profitable parts of the value chain. This shows that whether the sector is empowering or not there is a limit to women’s empowerment resulting from the gender and cultural norms of the country.

Social protection

The lack of social protection programmes for women in the shea sector was identified as a major challenge. In Hauts-Bassins 56.8 percent of women said that it was a major concern; 23 percent of women in Central-West and 20.3 percent *echoed their distress in Central regions*. In the validation meeting one woman said: “The problem is poverty. There are opportunities that pass us.” Social protection schemes can address this concern about poverty and make sure that women in the shea sector do not fall further into it.

5.3. Coping mechanisms

Strategies

Of the respondents, 50.7 percent said they had faced a financial shock or expense during the preceding 12 months because of their own illness or a family member’s health, 45.2 percent because of a death and 4.1 percent because of the costs for baptisms. In order to address these shocks or expenses, 48.6 percent accessed their savings and 31.3 percent from sales of wild fruit, nuts and vegetables to make extra income. Secondary strategies to mitigate hardship included bank credits – 2.7 percent – and the sale of assets – 8.1 percent. The development of an inclusive finance system would help these actors to protect themselves against the risks of everyday life.

Some groups have created their own systems to help members to sustain financial shocks. A women’s group – the Association Nananegbzanaga in Polesgo in rural Ouagadougou, for example, has 194 women members who set aside profits from sales of raw shea butter, soap and liquid dish soap in a combined fund, which is allocated to members when they need money for weddings, funerals or medical treatment. This is an informal way in which women can collectively save and help each other in a context where the state does not offer any type of social protection. The group stated that they have so far had little success because the little profit they do earn is re-invested to buy production materials. The idea of social protection is there, but the scheme has not achieved its objectives because capital and returns have been low. Two other shea groups save in the same way in Tanghin-Dassouri and Koudougou. All three groups ask their members to pay an initial CFA 1 000 to CFA 2 000 [USD 1.65 to USD 3.35] membership fee; the women do not earn an income from their sales but use the group as a saving or insurance scheme.

⁵ www.unicef.org/bfa/english/protection_915.html



Informal social protection schemes

The Association Nananegbzanaga was created in 2012 and has 194 members. They produce three products: raw shea butter for eating, soap bars made from shea and coconut oil, and liquid soap used for dishwashing and household cleaning. They decided to diversify their products because they were having difficulty sourcing and buying shea nuts. They produce 2 600 kg of raw butter and 8 740 bars of soap per year. The group was able to start because they received a donation of CFA 1 million [USD 1 654] from the charity SOS Village, and they allocated a space for the women to work.

Association Nananegbzanaga in Polesgo

Social benefits of women's groups

Shea organizations play a significant role in women's social lives. They provide an environment for women with different neighbourhoods and ethnic and religious backgrounds to exchange stories, learn new skills and acquire new information while working together for a common economic purpose. The processes of collecting, sorting, washing and crushing the nuts and making butter may be labour-intensive, especially when groups lack machinery, but the lack of technology enables women to bond and speak their minds freely. Burkina Faso is a patriarchal society where women have equal rights by law, but for most these are not reflected at home. There is no such thing as a centre for battered women or somewhere to go to seek advice. Shea groups provide this important social service for Burkinabé women and are often seen as places of refuge where problems can be set aside.

Some groups provide learning opportunities, which may be shea-related instruction or literacy classes. Literacy enables women to be more productive, to learn, to manage their activities and to take notes for record keeping. Women's groups are also the primary source of information on women's rights. With regard to family planning, the association is the first channel of information in 30.3 percent of instances, followed by radio and TV in 26.2 percent. The groups provide information about violence against women in 28.8 percent of cases and by radio or TV in 46.6 percent. With regard to women's awareness about their rights, radio and TV and radio are the sources of information in 61.4 percent of cases, followed by conversations among women in the groups in 19.3 percent of cases. These statistics illustrate the important social role of the groups in giving women access to information; the more information women have, the more power they may acquire.

6. Economic empowerment of women in the shea sector

Full participation of women in the shea sector is essential to ensure that their rights are recognized and to enable them to control their personal lives and exert influence in the community. The data collected in this study show that participation by rural and urban women in the shea sector in general increases their economic independence through the income they generate from the activity. Although this economic significance is important, the study found that the sector has a greater socio-cultural impact in that women earning an income are enabled to control how it is spent. This is an important empowerment indicator, because the study also showed that, irrespective of their income, women are involved in deciding on how to allocate money within the household.

6.1. Economic resilience of women

The average shea-related income per person per year is CFA 533 770 [USD 900], which is significantly above the national poverty line set at CFA 108 454 [USD 183] but below the international threshold of USD 1.90 per day. The important role of shea in this respect cannot be disputed in that it ensures that 68 percent of women are above the national poverty line. Of shea actors, 75.9 percent thought that their financial livelihoods had improved since they joined a shea group compared with 10.7 percent who believed that there had been no change and 13.4 percent who believed that their situation had deteriorated.

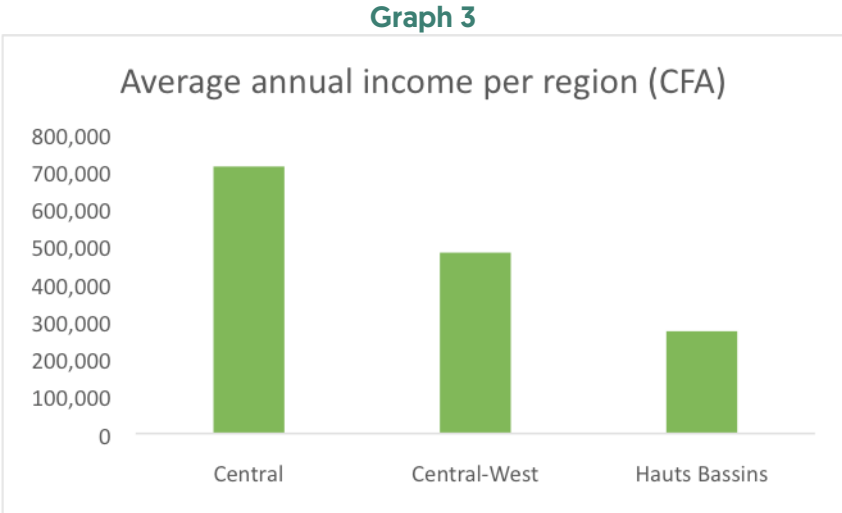
Table 6: Income derived from shea compared to total income

Quartiles	% of total income
25	52
50	73
75	91
Average	68

At first glance the generated mean income looks high at USD 900 per year, but these results hide some significant disparities. Closer examination shows that 0.5 percent of women do not benefit economically at all from their shea work. Most actors earn less than CFA 100 000 per year [USD 170], 50 percent earn less than CFA 200 000 per year [USD 341] and only a quarter make more than CFA 480 000 per year [USD 819]. A quarter of the poorest women are those who have the least influence over decisions regarding their work.

The distribution of income in the surveyed regions and the types of activities generated are shown in Graph 3 and Table 7.

Central region has the highest average income, followed by Central-West and Hauts-Bassins. There are significant disparities among regions, which can be explained by the fact that Central region concentrates on added-value shea activities such as butter and soap production.



Source: Fieldwork, 2015

Table 7: Average earnings according to the main activity of the group

	Main activities of members* not including leaders			
	Collector [94% women, 6% men]	Collector and transformer of nuts [97% women, 3% men]	Collector, transformer of nuts and butter [97% women, 3% men]	Traders of the derivative products [100% women]
Income generated from shea activities	CFA 204 688 [USD 351]	CFA 513 438 [USD 881]	CFA 686 136 [USD 1 177]	CFA 628 000 [USD 1 077]

Source: Survey, 2015. * Members' earnings, not leaders'.

The gender analysis showed that women are present in all parts of the value chain, but men are placed in only the more profitable areas in positions covering all parts of the value chain and as traders. All the men in the study occupied better-paid leadership positions, leaving women in tedious low-paid jobs, usually as collectors. Significantly, women do the hard labour but are not always included in discussions or negotiations regarding product prices. Most of the women leaders were heads of groups involved in less profitable areas of the value chain such as collecting or transforming nuts into butter. Men leaders earn 44 times more than women leaders because they only work in profitable areas. In interviews, women stated that men are entering the sector and becoming leaders of groups or traders because they recognize profit potentials, and that once men are involved culturally women will follow.

There is a significant gap between the earnings of leaders and those of members. The average leader's income can exceed CFA 1.3 million [USD 2 273], which is nearly three times the average income of group members in less profitable areas. This reflects the flaw in the structure of shea organizations in that women act as labourers but enjoy little financial benefit. This could be corrected by offering women fair prices for their shea nuts and labour, and by creating groups that share profits more equitably.

Madame Karité: Leading at the Top

Félicité Yameogo, 57, a well-known figure in the Burkinabé shea sector, is nicknamed Madame Karité or Mama Karité. She has been working in the sector for more than 30 years and is one of the very few Burkinabé women who controls all parts of the value chain. She started her career in shea by looking for an opportunity to make a secondary income, as do many other women, by collecting nuts and learning how to produce butter. She slowly built her group, and in 1986 she created New Karikis International.

She now has 1 632 employees, and produces a range of products such as raw shea butter for eating, body and face cream with natural and lemon scents, special face creams for acne or dry skin, various scented soaps, hair products and creams with herbs to relax muscles. She learned how to create these products by attending workshops in Burkina Faso and elsewhere. She produces between 120 tonnes and 300 tonnes of shea butter per year, using semi-traditional methods. About 40 percent of the butter is transformed into cosmetic products; the remaining 60 percent is sold for consumption. Madame Karité estimates that she works eight to ten hours a day and 240 days a year to produce butter and 60 days to produce cosmetics.

New Karikis International is a union of 102 women's groups that work together when Madame Karité receives large orders. Of the 102 groups, 16 have jointly applied for bank loans in the past. Madame Karité buys their butter at a reduced price, then acts as an agent to sell it internationally. Groups work together to meet large orders, each group producing as much butter as it can. Each member pays a CFA 1 000 membership fee, and each group pays CFA 15 000 to join the union. Annual revenue for the union varies annually according to the availability of shea nuts, ranging from CFA 5 million to CFA 10 million [USD 8 324 to USD16 658]. The profits are shared among the groups and their members. Some groups are more profitable than others simply because they can produce more butter. Members' annual revenue varies from CFA 60 000 to CFA 300 000 [USD 100 to USD 498].

Eighty percent of her products are exported internationally: 60 percent go to North America, 15 percent to Europe and 5 percent to China, which she says is a new market. The group has received a few loans from banks, one of which was for CFA 300 million. Obtaining loans was not easy because she had to show the bank that she had received a large order and then wait for the offer of a loan. This is a lengthy process and the bank gives money in instalments, which delays the work. She claims that most deals run cold because buyers lose interest when it takes too long. She stated that access to credit and high interest rates are among her main challenges. She says that banks need to adapt to the conditions [nut collection seasons, inability to have assets, etc.] and timeline of the shea sector to prevent banks from discriminating against women's groups.

Other challenges include difficulty in obtaining and paying for certification – she has never been able to get her products certified – sourcing attractive packaging to improve the marketing of her products, and marketing her products to an international market, for which she intends to create an online shopping site.

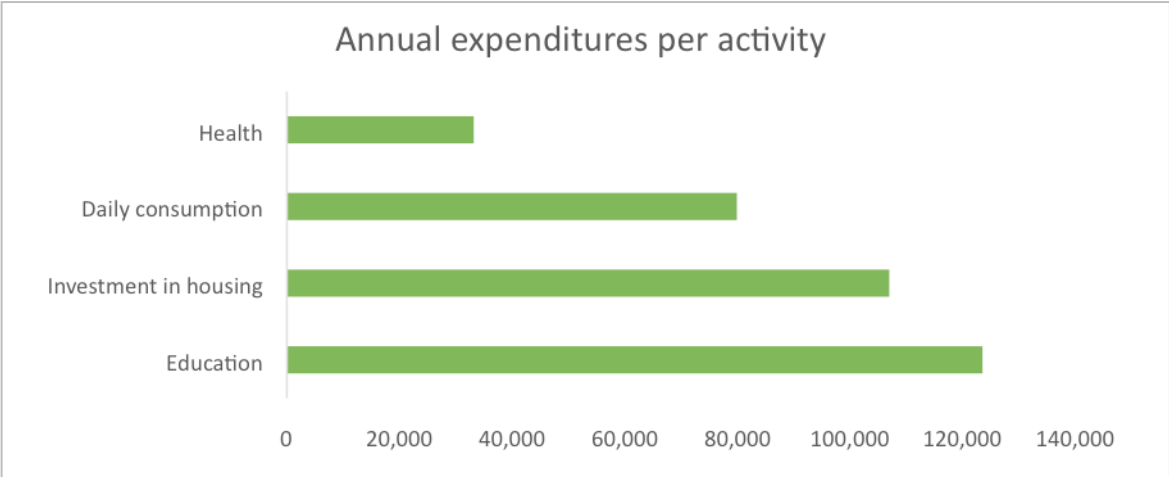
Her success is based on her ability to be present in all areas of the value chain and to earn an income comparable with those of her male counterparts, and especially on her keen business sense, her secret shea butter recipe and a proactive attitude.



Allocation of shea income

The study also investigated where women allocated their money. Data analysis showed that the main destination of revenue from shea activities was education for their children, which accounted for an average annual expenditure of CFA 123 446 [USD 210]. Burkina Faso provides free education, but many people opt to send their children to private schools because they offer a higher quality of education. It is common for people to struggle to afford the fees, which run from CFA 50 000 to CFA 95 000 per year per child [USD 85 to USD 195]. Spending on real estate is the second main expenditure among women, a sustainable physical capital investment that can ensure access to financial capital at a later date.

Graph4:



Source: Fieldwork, 2015.

There is a negative correlation between income allocated to education and health and the household head who decides how to spend money. Only 33.3 percent of respondents were household heads making decisions as to the allocation of household income; in the remaining cases, decisions were usually made by the husband or jointly.

6.2. Economic vulnerabilities

Assets

The acquisition of assets is an important strategy for coping with economic shocks. In Burkina Faso, the most sought-after type of asset is land or a home. In the survey, 60.9 percent of women did not own a piece of land, and only 37.0 percent owned land, 16.9 percent as sole owner and 20.1 percent with their partner. The study did not show any link between women’s participation in the shea industry and their empowerment in respect to land ownership.

Graph 5: Ownership



Source: Fieldwork, 2015.

Not owning land or a home prevents women from obtaining credit from a bank, and is consequently a significant issue. As in other sectors of the national economy, women in the shea sector have few assets available as physical or financial capital in the production process. Legally, women are able to inherit land and real estate from their parents or spouses, but this is seldom observed in rural areas and is usually contested by families when it is.

Table 8: Ownership of land

Gender of participants and land ownership							
			Ownership of land, alone or jointly				Total
			Alone	Jointly	Alone and jointly	No ownership	
Gender	Men	No.	1	1	0	4	6
		%	0.5	0.5	0.0	2.2	3.2
	Women	No.	31	37	1	111	180
		%	16.5	19.9	0.5	59.7	96.8
Total		No.	32	38	1	115	186
		%	17.5	20.4	0.5	61.8	100.0

Source: Fieldwork, 2015.

Women have the legal right to own land, but social pressures go against them. The constitution of Burkina Faso and the Law on Land and Agrarian Plan state that all individuals, irrespective of sex or age, have equal access to natural resources – and land is the primary natural resource. In practice, especially in areas where lineage traditions are strong, women are not entitled to own land and the right of possession applies exclusively to men. Men will lend portions of land to women, who usually use it to harvest vegetables, raise small animals and cook.

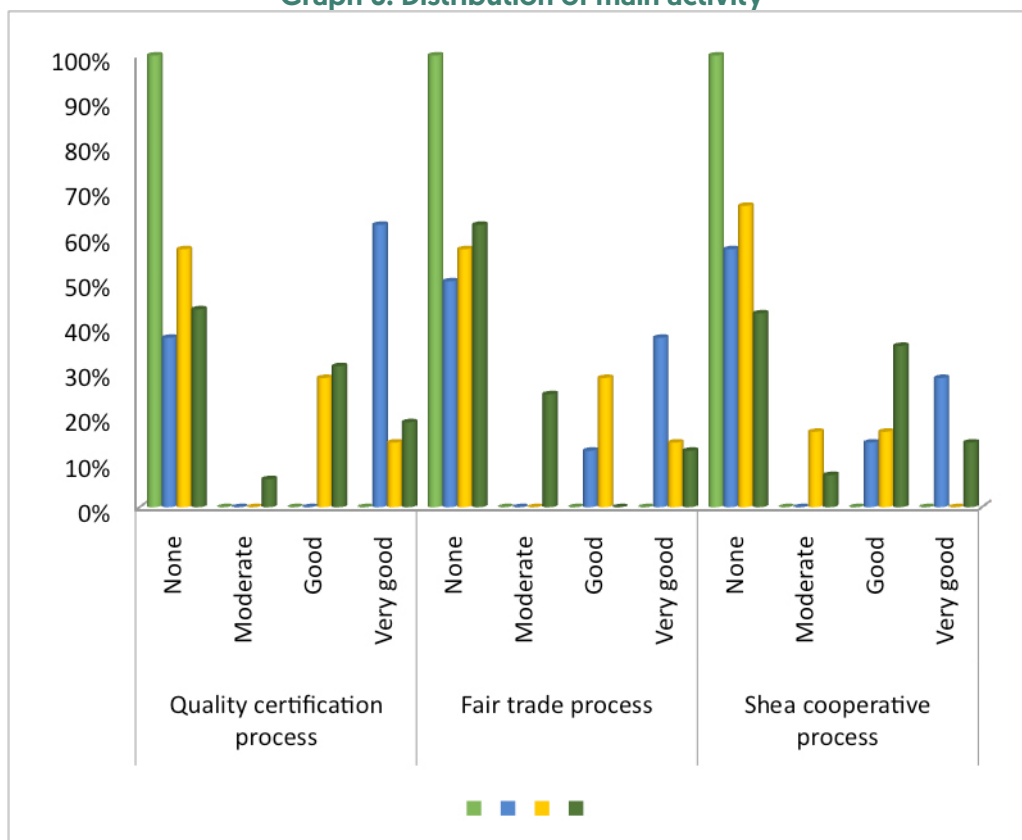
The field survey showed that this is still the case. With regard to the possession of land as a means of production, 59.3 percent of women do not possess land and only 16.7 percent owned property; 19.9 percent of women own land jointly with their husbands or partners. Of the women who did not own land, 26.3 percent were married, 16.7 percent lived with a partner, 11.3 percent were single and 5.4 percent were widowed.

Lack of involvement in the marketing process

In general women have limited involvement in the marketing process, which is dominated by group leaders or traders. Most women have not participated in any type of training; only the traders of derivatives are trained, 62.5 percent in fair-trade training and 37.5 percent in quality training. Of the other actors, 40 percent do not participate and there is consequently a lack of opportunities for women to gain knowledge and skills in the sector, which further narrows their chances of personal and business-oriented growth.

The degree of participation in the cooperative process is also low. Hence despite the economic benefits of the sector women have little influence in the foreign market and, in particular, solidarity among groups is low. Economic empowerment would benefit women more if there were fewer barriers to land and asset ownership, and if there were more opportunities for women to participate in markets and decision-making.

Graph 6: Distribution of main activity



Source: Fieldwork in 2015.

With regard to women’s independence, the study highlighted problems relating to access to credit, lack of technology and the need for more training, market access and support. Table 10 shows that 58.6 percent of the actors in Central region faced difficulties in obtaining credit, whereas only 22.9 percent of actors in Central West and 18.6 percent in Hauts-Bassins had the same problem. With regard to technology, 40 percent of the actors in Central West region faced difficulties compared with 36.7 percent in Central region and 23.3 percent in Hauts-Bassins. In terms of support such as grants and consultants, 56.8 percent of the actors in Hauts-Bassins faced difficulties compared with 23 percent in Central-West and 20.3 percent in Central region.

Table 9: Difficulties experienced by participants according to region (%)

		Difficulties reported				
		Access to credit	Lack of technology	Training	Market access	Other
Region	Central	58.6	36.7	32.5	47.6	61.9
	Central-West	22.9	40.0	42.5a	28.2	9.5
	Hauts-Bassins	18.6	23.3	25.0	24.3	28.6

Source: Fieldwork, 2015

With regard to other difficulties, one woman from Hauts-Bassins pointed out that “... there are no materials to protect women, mostly against reptiles. We need to minimize the risks women take when they leave their homes for the fields” [Questionnaire, 2015]. Members and leaders recounted their struggle to source shea nuts because the 2014/2015 harvest was significantly bad, which also increased the purchase price of nuts and reduced profits. In the stakeholder

meeting, Madame Karité explained how she had to travel to the Ghanaian border and even cross into the country to buy nuts because she could not find any in 2014/2015.

Table 10: Difficulties encountered by participants according to the main activity (%)

		Difficulties				
		Access to finance	Lack of technology	Training	Market access	Other
Principal activity	Nut collector	15.7	21.1	5.0	17.5	23.8
	Nut collector and transformer	30.0	44.4	25.0	36.9	57.1
	Collector and transformer of nuts into butter	54.3	34.4	70.0	42.7	19.0
	Trader of derived products	0.0	0.0	0.0	2.9	0.0

Source: 2015 data from the field.

Actors faced different challenges according to their place in the value chain, but groups also faced challenges relating to the degree of development of their business. The Karikis International group, for example, has established international clients and diversified and developed products, and it has expressed the desire to improve its packaging and to start marketing its products online. Other groups are facing different challenges because they are at different stages of development and are experiencing difficulties in terms of obtaining credit, buying machinery and accessing markets.

6.3. Coping mechanisms

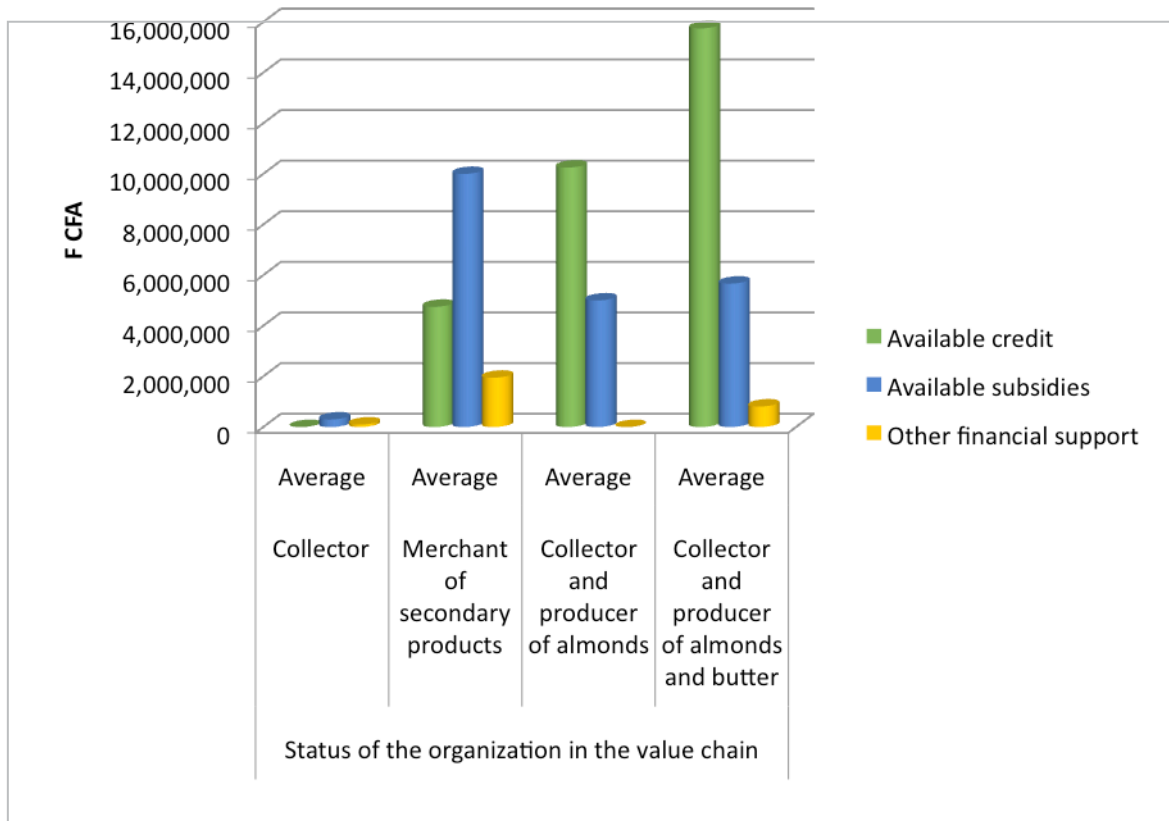
Additional sources of income

Despite the economic importance of the shea sector, it was interesting that only 23.8 percent of the actors surveyed lived off their shea income alone. The remaining women had a second job to support them: 6.5 percent work in agriculture, 30.3 percent had small businesses and 30.8 percent were artisans.

Access to credit

Of the actors, 66.9 percent said they had already obtained and paid off at least one loan. Access to credit through formal contracts with financial institutions or through informal channels did not appear to be a major constraint. In the groups, women received financial support in the form of loans, grants or donations, and 10 percent of the groups had received this type of support. More support is directed to women collectors than to actors located in other links of the chain, such as collectors, processors and butter producers. In terms of volume, however, the trend is reversed. Groups involved in the collection and processing of nuts and butter received loans of up to CFA 15 million [USD 25 609], which they used for equipment, training and improvements to production. Traders of derivative products fared best, with grants averaging CFA 10 million [USD 17 072].

Graph 7: Financial support by organizational structure



Source: Fieldwork, 2015.

7. Political empowerment of women in the shea sector

Political empowerment of women through the shea sector is understood in this study through participation in political life including membership in a political party, occupying a leadership position or the ability to express one's voice in his or her community and aspirations.

7.1. Political resilience of women

Burkina Faso has a long way to go with regard to improving women's political rights. Children, for example, belong to the father even if he has not taken care of them for ten years. Women have no property rights to the family home in a divorce, and there is no legal recourse in domestic abuse cases. For these reasons, the study was not able to identify major findings.

Table 11: Political participation

			Membership of political party		Total
			Yes	No	
	Men	No.	2	4	6
		%	1.1	2.2	3.3
	Women	No.	27	153	180
		%	14.5	82.3	96.8
Total		No.	29	157	186
		%	15.6	84.4	100.0

Source: Fieldwork 2015.

With regard to women in groups in the shea sector, only 14.5 percent were members of a political party and none occupied any kind of political position. This reflects traditional practices where women's votes are sought only during elections, and they are seen as "electoral cattle". There are cultural reasons for this lack of participation in politics among Burkinabé women: first, women are not supposed to be controversial but submissive in nature, and second, if a job requires travel or absence from the home the husband's agreement has to be obtained.

7.2. Political vulnerabilities

Lack of a unified female voice

Since the disengagement of the state the shea sector remains an industry without a strategic direction recognized by all stakeholders. The question is whether the sector suffers from poor organization or a lack of a unified voice that well represents women's interests among the organizations. Most unions and collectives are not structured to represent producers: they function as private companies, using their networks to ensure steady supplies and obtain grants and subsidies, and their relationships with grassroots organizations tend to be one-sided business arrangements. As a result women's voices are not being heard, and women are not leading or even participating in important discussions.

7.3. Coping mechanisms

Aspirations

Participants expressed a desire for financial independence in the next five years to enable them to carry out their activities. Women also expressed the desire for access to modern technology at the workplace to facilitate their jobs. In Central region, 33.3 percent of participants aspire to have modern means of production and 23.3 percent want access to fair trade. Every association wants to own land and to have financial independence. In Central West, 53.5 percent of participants also want financial independence and access to credit to carry out their activities.

The main aspirations vary from one area to another, but in general women's main aspirations in the shea sector for the next five years are:

- stronger and more organized groups;
- easier access to means of production;
- increased market access;
- access to a social protection system;
- literacy programmes and other learning opportunities;
- access to finance in the form of credit and grants;
- certification, which has been a major barrier for most groups because of its high cost – CFA 3 million per year; many international buyers want bio or fair trade shea butter but the groups cannot afford it; and
- improved access to raw materials.

8. The main findings

Economic gains are limited

The shea sector supports women economically with an average of CFA 530 000 [USD 892] per actor per year. Asked whether they felt that their lives had improved since joining the shea industry, 75.9 percent of women agreed that their financial situation had improved. The first destination of revenue from shea is education, with annual individual expenditure of CFA 123 446 [USD 208]. Asked how they deal with financial shocks, 48.6 percent of women stated that they use their savings as a first resort and 31.3 percent that they seek help from family or friends.

Women are mostly in control of spending the income from shea

With regard to the use of the income they earn from shea activities, 77.5 percent of women decide for themselves and 7.3 percent decide jointly with their husbands or partners. Household dynamics play a dominant role in the lives of Burkinabé women, and households must be taken into account in any desired improvements. It cannot be claimed that women in the shea sector are economically empowered because they earn an income – more is required for them to be considered truly empowered, such as making independent decisions regarding expenditure and contributing to economic decisions in the workplace.

The individuals who profit most from the shea industry are the managers of the organizations, who earn three times more than the average woman worker. The average yearly income per manager is CFA 1.3 million [USD 2 277]. This income inequality poses a problem, because it is not women who profit from the business, even though shea is considered “women’s gold”. It is essentially a matter of the operation of the entire structure, which blocks women in the lower echelons because it encourages them to do the traditional work of collecting, processing and transforming the nuts. And there is no impetus or space for women to take on gender-breaking roles such as marketing and selling. Other reasons why women are not accessing more profitable areas of the business range from lack of education, lack of knowledge or skills and gender barriers that require husbands’ permission to work or travel. Men leaders earn 44 times more than their female counterparts because their activities are concentrated at the more profitable parts of the value chain. Overall, women occupy the sector – but the few men who are present run the sector economically.

More social benefits than economic

Other than the economic benefits of groups, the social effects that contribute to the fight against poverty must be considered. In this respect women cite two major roles of the organizations: i) as the core for training and information; and ii) as the social “glue” in rural areas. With regard to their personal growth, 38.2 percent of women reported an increased awareness and a more open mind, 24.3 percent had improved their relationships with other women and 15.1 percent considered their lives to have improved in general. A 36-year-old woman from Hauts-Bassins said: “Even though my financial situation has not changed, my psychological state has developed because I have become more rational and my relationship with my husband has improved.” This report highlights the social benefits women attribute to the shea groups, which has not been well documented in previous studies.

Women’s political independence through the shea sector is captured by examining participation in political life, for example membership of a political party or occupation of a political post, and considering access to land, property ownership and the possibilities of joining independent

organizations and expressing their views openly. There is plenty of room for progress considering that of all the women surveyed not one occupied a political position and only 14.5 percent were members of a political party. Burkinabé women are still in the background when it comes to expressing themselves, especially at the middle and higher social levels. Nonetheless, some women feel more self-confident in expressing their views in their shea groups. “My life has changed a lot in a positive way. I now speak my mind publicly,” said a 52 year old woman from Hauts-Bassins.

Education is a key player

Of the women surveyed 48.9 percent had not received any formal education. This strongly affects women’s chances of moving up in the shea chain and obtaining higher salaries. Of the managers, 25.0 percent had elementary level education and 30.6 percent had completed secondary level. Women expressed the desire for access to literacy classes as a major aspiration for their future and the future of their organizations. Lack of education is a direct barrier for women, who must rely on managers and owners to set product prices and negotiate contracts. If the shea sector is to become truly empowering for women, it will have to be possible for women to obtain the skills and capabilities that will enable them to reach every level of the business.

Challenges stated by women

Women highlighted challenges such as lack of access to credit, lack of modern facilities and technology, the need for training, lack of market access and lack of support for actors. The analysis indicated that 58.6 percent of women from Central region faced difficulties in obtaining credit, compared with 22.9 percent of women in Central-West and 18.6 percent in Hauts-Bassins. Lack of technology was cited as a concern by 40 percent of women in Central-West region compared with 36.7 percent in Central region and 23.3 percent in Hauts-Bassins. With regard to support such as grants and consultations, 56.8 percent of women in Hauts-Bassins faced difficulties compared with 23.0 percent in Central-West and 20.3 percent in Central region. It was clearly evident that the difficulties faced by women were directly linked with their level of education: those with a primary level experienced more difficulties than those with higher education levels.

9. Moving forward

To increase the economic empowerment of women in the shea sector, sound policies must be implemented and a comprehensive approach adopted; it is also possible that development partners could increase investments to enhance the economic empowerment of women, and particularly those involved in the shea sector. Women certainly possess knowledge that is transmitted from generation to generation about nut collection techniques, processing, butter production and marketing, but they are not capitalizing on these talents. Rural women, who play a major leadership role in the shea sector in terms of collecting nuts and primary processing, will require better support from the Government, unions, groups, companies and NGOs to become fully competitive and empowered.

Women dominate the shea sector in terms of numbers and carrying out the most arduous tasks, but they do not benefit from the financial gains of the sector. Bearing in mind women's low levels of education, action must be oriented towards enabling them to take ownership of the organization and operation of the associations because it is currently the heads and executive officers who benefit more than members.

With regard to investing in technology, there appears to be a paradox: lack of technology was a major difficulty cited by women, and in interviews they often described the difficulties of having to do everything by hand. Suitable machinery would save time, money and women's energy, but it would negatively affect the social benefits they gain from labour because it would no longer be the locus for social exchanges among women. This should not prevent further investment in machinery, but such investment should recognize the inherent benefits of these groups.

Briefly, the recommendations are:

- Increase alliances or joint ventures between cooperatives to enhance communication and the regular dissemination of prices, and increase the bargaining power of sellers with a limited number of large-scale buyers.
- Create a government-sponsored regional or national structure to provide globally recognized certification or accreditation, and increase the visibility of the national product to international buyers.
- Enhance access to savings and loans to enable collectors to store their products and reduce the incidence of distress sales, and support the acquisition of technology to enable collectors to move up the value chain and capture the more profitable segments.
- Invest in literacy, mentoring and business programmes for women in the sector.
- Create and promote social protection programmes for the groups or a larger structure that provides health, family, educational and financial services.
- Reform the workings of the groups to improve women's well-being and help to improve women's roles in the sector by leading them to more profitable areas.

In conclusion, this study confirms the financial importance of shea to women but emphasizes that it is the social aspects of the business that empower women. A balance will have to be struck between making Burkina Faso's shea industry more profitable and keeping up with increasing global demand while including women in all aspects of the process, particularly in the more profitable areas of the value chain.

It is important to emphasize that gender and women's empowerment are not about women alone or the disempowerment of men: policies and programmes must consider the needs of women and men if women are to gain more financial benefits from the sector. Future research could focus on case studies of women who have achieved success in leadership positions in the sector and identify the factors that helped them to thrive. In addition, projects that focus on creating and improving social protection capabilities within shea structures would be interesting in terms of examining the situation over a period of time to evaluate the effects on women's livelihoods.

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Annex

Summary of major shea interventions

Project	Period	Financing	Implemented by	Objectives	Places of intervention	Results
Support for technological development						
Shea Project	1986–1991	Netherlands	Netherlands Development Organization	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Increase the incomes of rural women - Stimulate self-advancement of rural women - Better use of national resources - Reduce rural women's workload 	Koudougou	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ten nut presses installed - Training on the use of presses
<i>Programmes Micro Réalisations</i>	1982–1997	Canada	<i>Programmes Micro Réalisations</i>	Develop production unit infrastructure and equipment for the collection, processing and storage of nuts and butter production	Ouagadougou, Tanghin-Dassouri, Manga, Garango, Banfora, Koudougou	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Construction and equipping of eight centres of production - Organization and management tools - Offices, supplies, training in management, etc.
<i>Projet du Ministère de l'Action Sociale</i>	Mid-1990s	Morocco	<i>Ministère de l'Action Sociale</i>	Support for the technological aspects of shea butter making	Bougouriba Kéné Dougou Poni Tapoa	Establishment of 56 manual presses

Project	Period	Financing	Implemented by	Objectives	Places of intervention	Results
Support for the development of markets and product quality						
National Shea Project	1995 – present	Canada Taiwan	Ministère de l'Action Sociale	Rehabilitation of the shea tree sector to contribute to the balance of trade and improved rural economy	National	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Equipping groups with technology, production tools and mills - System of financing with guarantee fund - Machines and materials provided under partial or total subsidy - Most women's organizations profited from the elimination of illiteracy and the collection, storage and processing of nuts - Between 26 000 and 30 000 women profited
Shea Industry Project	1994–1996	Canada	CECI	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Improve the quality of nuts sold on the market, - Develop a holistic understanding of the various aspects of the shea tree sector - Improve use of market information - Establish control over long-term commercial deals of shea butter for cosmetics 	National	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 15 000 women were trained - Harmonization of the techniques of collection, treatment, storage of nuts and manufacture of butter

Project	Period	Financing	Implemented by	Objectives	Places of intervention	Results
<i>Projet Femme et Filière Karité</i>	1996–1998	Canada and United Nations Development Fund for Women	CECI	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Help women involved in production, create organizations to increase their negotiation capacities - Help women producers to maximize profits from sales of their products by supporting access to markets - Document the project pilot for further dissemination 	Houet Sissili Ziro	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 40 groups established - 1 000 women trained - Grant of CFA 35.0 million
<i>Projet d'Appui à la Commercialisation du Karité</i>	1998–2000	Canada and United Nations Development Fund for Women	CECI	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Develop women's marketing capacities - Increase women's market share in profitable sections of the value chain - Improve the positions of women involved in production 	National	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Comptoir Burkina Karité with 200 prospective customers - Likely L Likely markets in France, Italy and Belgium - CFA 10 million for equipment - 120 women trained in marketing, savings and credit, management of working capital, trade negotiations - Support for establishment of Coordination of Women in the Shea Tree Sector

Project	Period	Financing	Implemented by	Objectives	Places of intervention	Results
<i>Projet Appui au Filère Bio Alimentaire</i>	2000–2004	Canada	Tecsult Inc., Canada	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Support for the development of the sector - Set up technological and commercial information systems - Contribute to professionalization of the groups - Enhance competitiveness of Burkinabé producers 	National	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Group marketing and management supported - Financial support
<i>Pro Karité</i>	2005–2007	Netherlands and Common Fund for Commodities	International Council for Research in Agro-Forestry and <i>Institut de recherche en sciences appliquées et technologies</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Improve product quality and access to markets for shea butter from sub-Saharan Africa - Establish regional and international consensus on the quality of shea products 	Regional: Burkina Faso, Mali, Niger, Senegal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Butter quality standards improved - Analyses of product content – oils, fats etc.
<i>Dynamisation des filières agroalimentaires au Burkina Faso</i>	2008–present	Cooperation Canada and TecSult Inc.	<i>Union des producteurs agricoles du Québec</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Contribute to the reduction of poverty through the development of the productive potential of Burkina Faso: i) diversification of the productive base and improvement of competitiveness; ii) improvement of food balance 	National	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Innovations, and access to the markets - Professionalization of services

Sampled organizations

	Region	Province	Commune	Urban/ Rural	Name of locality	Name of organization	No. of members	Responsible person
1	Centre-Ouest	Boulkiemdé	Koudougou	Urban	Sogpélcé	Teegwend Bao Manegré	58	ZOMA Monique
2	Centre-Ouest	Boulkiemdé	Koudougou	Urban	Godin	Teel Taaba	60	YAMEOGO/NANA Cecile
3	Centre-Ouest	Boulkiemdé	Koudougou	Urban	Gui	Buud Numa	34	MAGLOIRE Nonguierma
4	Centre-Ouest	Boulkiemdé	Koudougou	Urban	Burkina	Wend Penga	23	BAMOUNI/YAMEOGO Pascaline
5	Centre-Ouest	Boulkiemdé	Koudougou	Urban	Burkina	Wend Penga	23	BAMOUNI/YAMEOGO Pascaline
6	Centre-Ouest	Sanguié	Réo	Urban	Réo	Crédit du Nord	2 640	BAYALA Eli
7	Centre-Ouest	Sanguié	Réo	Urban	Réo	Groupement Sulu Nyee	35	KAMA Elisabeth
8	Centre-Ouest	Sanguié	Réo	Urban	Réo	Groupement Shele Yini Nyee	35	KANDO Eya
9	Centre-Ouest	Sanguié	Réo	Urban	Koudougou	Individual	1	DAKUO Odette
10	Centre-Ouest	Sanguié	Réo	Urban	Koudougou	Groupement Féminin le Progrès	21	TIENDREBEOGO Alizeta
11	Centre	Kadiogo	Ouagadougou	Rural	Polésogo	Namalgzanga	194	BOLY Mariam
12	Centre	Kadiogo	Ouagadougou	Rural	Komsilga	Néma	45	NANA Mousa
13	Centre	Kadiogo	Ouagadougou	Urban	Somgandé	New Karitis International	1 632	YAMEOGO Félicité
14	Centre	Kadiogo	Ouagadougou	Rural	Tangin-Dassouri	Sougri-Nooma	20	WILLI Alizeta
15	Centre	Kadiogo	Ouagadougou	Urban	Tangin	Individual	1	GUIRMA Zenabou
16	Centre	Kadiogo	Ouagadougou	Urban	Tangin	Individual	1	OUEDRAOGO Yembi Asseta
17	Centre	Kadiogo	Ouagadougou	Urban	Pissy	Groupement Féminin Delebou	50	MONE/GUINGANE Bernadette
18	Centre	Kadiogo	Ouagadougou	Rural	Sahongo	Groupement Delwendé	30	KIENTEGA Fati
19	Centre	Kadiogo	Ouagadougou	Urban	Tampuy	Ram-tareb-som	403	KABORE/OUEDRAOGO Martine

20	Centre	Kadiogo	Ouagadougou	Rural	Tangin-Dassouri	Groupement rata manegre	35	COMPAORE Korotimi
21	Centre	Kadiogo	Ouagadougou	Urban	Rimkiéta	Individual	1	OUEDRAOGO Poko
22	Centre	Kadiogo	Ouagadougou	Urban	Tampuy	Individual	1	KANAKEI Moussa
23	Centre	Kadiogo	Ouagadougou	Rural	Boassa	Groupement villageois mixte de production de beurre de karité	29	KABORE Salamata
24	Centre	Kadiogo	Ouagadougou	Rural	Tangin-Dassouri	Association Ragussi	75	ZONGO Patrick
25	Centre	Kadiogo	Ouagadougou	Rural	Pabré	Wavogue	18	COMPAORE Rihanata
26	Centre	Kadiogo	Ouagadougou	Rural	Pabré	Association de femmes de Pabré	27	ZONGO Salamata
27	Hauts-Bassins	Houet	Bobo Dioulasso	Urban	Bobo Dioulasso	Yeleen nous pour vous	13	TIEMTARBOUM Henriette
28	Hauts-Bassins	Houet	Bobo Dioulasso	Urban	Bobo Dioulasso	Rassemblement Populaire Burkinabé	163	TRAORE Ténin
29	Hauts-Bassins	Houet	Koundougou	Rural	Koundougou	Benkadi	418	BARROT Assetou
30	Hauts-Bassins	Houet	Bobo Dioulasso	Urban	Bobo Dioulasso	DOTI women's association	206	CISSE Salimata
31	Hauts-Bassins	Houet	Bobo Dioulasso	Urban	Bobo Dioulasso	Individual	1	TRAORE Saidou
32	Hauts-Bassins	Houet	Bobo Dioulasso	Urban	Bobo Dioulasso	Union des groupements de productrices de produits de karité	4 414	TRAORE Abdoulaye
33	Hauts-Bassins	Houet	Koundougou	Rural	Mangorotou	Soutoura	103	DAO Mariam
34	Hauts-Bassins	Houet	Koundougou	Rural	Mangorotou	Sabari Kadi	167	DIONOU Minata
35	Hauts-Bassins	Houet	Péni	Rural	Noumondara	Faso Yantara	60	DAO Maman
36	Hauts-Bassins	Houet	Péni	Rural	Noumondara	Sabari Kagni	75	OUATTARA Diagala

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