

We support education and the environment for a sustainable future.



school supplies



installing roof



planting trees

### Alaffia School Projects

Education and empowerment of young Africans are essential to the future of Africa. If African youth are helped with the dilemmas they face - such as harsh poverty and lack of infrastructure, they will be empowered to help their communities in the future.

Students in Togo are required to provide their own school uniforms and books, which are a huge expense for poor families. For six years, we have donated school supplies and uniforms to children in our Togolese communities. We also donate desks and install new roofs on village schools to make learning a more enjoyable experience. Villages must build and furnish their own schools, and often cannot afford adequate seating and expensive roofing.

Now, we are partnering with many of our retail stores to collect school supplies – to unite our communities in the US and Togo and get our customers involved in our projects. Look for donation boxes in your local store or contact us at [alaffia.com](http://alaffia.com) for more information on becoming involved.

### Reforestation Project

Deforestation and climate change are destroying Togo's remaining forests. To mitigate the effect of these on Togolese communities, Alaffia donates fruit and forage saplings to farmers in rural villages. We also conduct training to discourage the cutting of shea trees for firewood and charcoal to preserve this important indigenous resource.

## Alaffia Shea Butter Cooperative

Alaffia supports gender equality through Fair Trade of indigenous resources and knowledge.

Shea butter has traditionally been a women's trade in West Africa, and from collecting the nuts to extracting and selling the oil locally, women controlled this resource until the last few hundred years. Since the colonial period, the global trade of shea butter has been controlled by Western interests, who keep the price low to benefit themselves and African elites. We believe it is time to compensate these women with fair prices and to use this fair trade of shea butter to help eliminate the gender gaps that exist in our African communities.

Due to colonial legacies, African women are underrepresented in all economic sectors, leaving them subject to male control. The making of shea butter in the Alaffia cooperative provides stable economic returns to its members. In addition, it gives these women a sense of worth, which they have been historically denied, and a sense of cultural pride as their traditional skills and knowledge are valued around the world. It also brings a sense of empowerment as the members see the money from the sale of their handcrafted shea butter used in enacting community projects in their communities.

*Alaffia Shea Butter is now Certified Fair for Life: Social and FairTrade by IMO, one of the world's premier certifying bodies.*

Alaffia shea butter is made by women, used primarily by women, and the funds from the sales are helping women through empowerment projects. This in and of itself is empowering to our cooperative members, who recently voted to give their salary increase to "helping others in our community." Our belief is that a true quality product is one that not only helps individuals, but also uplifts a whole society.

Alaffia Shea Butter Cooperative, Sokode, Togo - August 2009



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# Alaffia®

## Fair Trade Skin Care

### Alaffia is Fair Trade

Alaffia was founded as a way to empower communities in West Africa through the fair trade of shea butter. Fair trade is the fundamental foundation of our organization, which is made up of the Alaffia Shea Butter Cooperative in Togo, West Africa and Alaffia Sustainable Skin Care in Olympia, WA USA.

The cooperative handcrafts the indigenous raw ingredients; the Alaffia team in Olympia creates the finished products. Proceeds from sales of our products are then returned to communities in Togo to fund community empowerment and gender equality projects.

Look inside for information on our community projects and how you can join us and become involved.

Sustainable Skin Care™

Alaffia shea butter is certified Fair for Life: Social and FairTrade by IMO.



Alaffia was founded as a way to **alleviate poverty** in West Africa and help communities remain self sustainable through the **fair trade of indigenous resources**.

We dedicate a minimum of 10% of every sale to fund community empowerment projects in our Togolese communities.

## Bicycles for Education

In rural areas of Togo, students walk up to 10 miles a day to attend school. There are no buses, and families cannot afford private transportation. As a result, school becomes very time consuming and many boys and almost all girls decide to quit school in order to fulfill their family obligations. Nationwide, only 14 percent of girls aged 12 to 18 attend secondary school. In rural areas, this number drops to only 9 percent - this means over 90% of rural girls drop out. The number is slightly better for boys, with 46 percent of school aged boys attending secondary school nationwide, and 16 percent in rural areas (UNICEF, 2002-2004).

In 2004, Alaffia began collecting and sending used bicycles to Togolese students to encourage them to stay in and complete school. In 2006, we distributed our first shipment of 400 bicycles to students in 14 rural villages. In 2008, we sent over 1,500 more bicycles to girls in 50 more villages. The two containers of bicycles that we shipped in 2009 bring the total to over 3,000. We now distribute these bicycles primarily to girls as part of our efforts to advance gender equality. Our follow-up visits show that the bicycles are helping students remain in school in Togo.

These bicycles are collected in and around our Puget Sound communities in Washington and Oregon with the help of our retailers, volunteers and Alaffia staff. This project brings our communities in the US and in Togo together. Over the past four years, we have seen interest and participation in this project growing in our US communities.

We are involved with several youth and school groups, who are expressing pride at being able to use their skills in repairing bicycles and resources to help their counterparts in less affluent areas of the world. Also, we donate the smaller bikes we collect to WA state food banks and foster care programs. Furthermore, as we only collect used bicycles, this project also keeps bicycles from ending up in landfills.

Check our website and facebook page or email us at [community@alaffia.com](mailto:community@alaffia.com) for more information on how you can be involved.



Bicycle donations & volunteers, 2009



Bicycle recipients, Togo, 2009



Bicycle Recipients, Togo, 2009



Fousena fund recipients, 2009



Fousena fund recipient & child.



Goal: healthy mothers & children

## Women's Equality and Health Care Projects

Each year in Sub-Saharan Africa, 270,000 women die of complications with pregnancy and childbirth. Over her lifetime, an African woman has a 1 in 16 chance of dying in pregnancy or childbirth, compared to 1 in 2,400 in Europe (UNICEF, 2002-2004) There are several reasons for the high maternal mortality rates in Sub Saharan Africa, including extreme poverty, loss of community structure and inadequate infrastructure.

While the problem seems insurmountable, improvements are possible. In 2006, we started our maternal health care projects following the World Health Organization's (WHO) recommendations for improving maternal death rates. These recommendations include:

1. Improving resource management and using existing knowledge to provide proper maternal care, including basic care during and after pregnancy and adequate and timely specialized care.
2. Income and gender equality and community empowerment to strengthen community involvement in using indigenous knowledge, participating in education, training and research, and improving primary health care skills.

There are two parts to our women's health care project. The first is the Fousena Fund –a direct response to WHO's first recommendation. Each year, we sponsor 70 women in rural Togolese communities and provide them with full pre and postnatal care. The Alaffia Women's Clinic Project is the second part of our women's health efforts. In 2007 we started partnering with local Togolese health clinics to provide information and training on all women's health issues, including nutrition, family planning, preventing female genital mutilation practices, and many more.

For information on participating in our maternal health care projects, email [community@alaffia.com](mailto:community@alaffia.com)