

DRUMMING  
CALL AND RESPON  
CRAFT TEXTILEWE  
SCHOOL ADINKRA  
PLAYS PRINTING SONG  
JUNK BAND  
STORYTELLING  
AFRICAN  
APTS WEEK TOYS  
COMMUNITY COHESION EVENTS  
TEAM BUILDING  
FOOD  
AND  
MUCH  
MORE...



From Bean to Cream



## Shea nuts are the fruit of the Shea tree, found only in Africa.

Shea are a source of money and food 16 countries in Africa, particularly in Benin, Burkina Faso, Côte d'Ivoire, Guinea and Mali, as well as Ghana.

Ghana produces around 65,000 tonnes of shea nuts a year. In 2008, 42,500 tonnes were exported with a value of \$42m (42 million dollars) (FAO).

Traditional shea butter processing is carried out by village women. They will pick the fruits from the trees and use the husk to eat. The middle of the nut is called a Kernel. The kernel is dried in the sun before roasting it. The nuts are then crushed and afterwards ground to a paste. The paste is then stirred or churned by hand into creamy butter. This is then boiled to get all the water out and to make sure it is clean. As it cools it becomes hard and can be made into lots of different shapes and sizes to be sold.

Shea butter is used in Africa as a cooking fat and as a skin and hair treatment. In Europe it is mainly used by the food industry in chocolate, margarine, and confectionery products because of its low cost.



# From Bean to Cream

Shea butter takes a lot of time and effort to make, starting with a tree which only fruits 20 years after planting! It takes 20-30 hours of work to produce just one kilo of shea butter.

After reading the introduction ask children to put these pictures in order





Shea trees grow wild

- They take 20 years to mature
- Cutting Shea is prohibited in many areas



Shea fruit

- the fruit is surrounded by a sharp pulp which is eaten
- The kernel is stripped out and dried



Kernel Roasting

- Dried kernels are roasted
- Open fires are common in the north.



Kernel Crushing

- Traditional large pestal and mortars are used
- This is rare now, this process is mainly carried out in mechanised mills



Kernel Grinding

Traditionally large pestal and mortars are used

This is rare now, the process is mainly carried out in mechanised mills



The final process is to perfume and package the Shea



When the mixture cools it is moulded into various shapes and sizes for sale in the market



The oil is boiled or separated by hand to remove all moisture



The mixture thickens and pales to turn from brown to white/ivory



Whipping by hand

## Follow on Activity

Which of these activities do you think should earn the most money?

One of these activities earns more money than any of the others. Which do you think it is?

Do you think this is fair?

Most of the shea butter from Ghana is exported as raw butter, little is processed and packed in Ghana. The process with a product is the end stage and is called “valued added”. This is the place the real money is made.



[www.africanactivities.org.uk](http://www.africanactivities.org.uk)  
[kwame@africanactivities.org.uk](mailto:kwame@africanactivities.org.uk)  
t: 02380 864 954  
m: 07715 44 55 48