



## NEWS

*Devoted to the women of Ghana and the finest shea butter*

Naasakle Limited is committed to providing the most natural and highest quality shea butter products while working to promote the well-being of over 700 women in the Northern Region of Ghana.

### What sets Naasakle shea butter products apart from other producers?

- They produce Shea butter under strict quality controlled conditions.
- They start with hand sorted, good quality nuts.
- They use clean pipe borne water (not well or river water)
- They do not use iron-utensils or iron based equipment.
- They operate in a very clean sanitary facility.
- Their employees and women groups are trained and appreciate the need to produce and maintain a high quality product consistently.
- They run quality analysis testing on a regular basis through The Ghana Standards Board or another internationally recognized laboratory.

### CREATING THE BEST FOR THE GREATER GOOD

According to an Arabian proverb, "If you have much, give of your wealth; if you have little, give of your heart." For Mother Akuete, a woman doing remarkable things in the African country of Ghana, improving both her community and the world has given both her heart true satisfaction. Through her own philanthropic and business efforts, Mother Akuete has improved the lives of her employees beyond measure and has shed a light on struggling women of Ghana.

#### Personal History

Mother Akuete's journey to this point has been a success story in its own right. In 1979, she was forced alongside her family to flee Ghana after a coup d'état. After crossing the border into the neighboring country of Togo by foot and facing arrest in Benin, Mother Akuete eventually reached Nigeria, where she received political refugee status at the United States Embassy. Having lost everything, Mother Akuete and her family were forced to start over in the United States. Never wavering in her devotion to others, she worked two jobs to support her children, encouraging them to study and work hard. In a testament to her support and love, her children have gone on to study at some of America's top universities, becoming successful businesspeople and doctors.

#### The Women of Ghana

Upon her arrival to the United States, Mother Akuete's work



Mother Akuete, pictured at right, works alongside her employees to produce a batch of black soap with shea butter.

for the betterment of others was only beginning. Her desire to help and her personal use of shea butter began to blend into one.

"When I lived in the United States, I constantly used shea butter to keep my skin moisturized. I wasn't accustomed to the dry winters and the shea butter was my protection," Mother Akuete said.

Recognizing a worldwide demand for shea butter, Mother Akuete has developed a customer base starting in the United States and spanning the world. In 2003, she returned to her homeland of Ghana after 19 years in the United States to start Naasakle Limited, a company aimed at selling her product. She went from selling from a suitcase to friends in the United States, to exporting 18 tons per

month around the world. As demand grew, Mother Akuete saw an opportunity to expand and extend the production capabilities to women in the economically depressed Northern Region of Ghana, where poverty levels are estimated at 70 percent.

Poverty is a major issue in the Northern Region, affecting the women especially. According to a disturbing report by the United Nations International Fund for Agricultural Development, "more than half of the women [in the Northern Region] who are heads of households in rural areas are among the poorest 20 percent of the population. Women bear heavy workloads. In the region in general, women work at least twice as many hours as men, spend about three times as many hours transporting water and goods, and transport four times as much in volume."

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**Join the shea revolution today!**

**Please contact Naasakle for orders, inquiries, or questions.**

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*“It’s one thing to just give handouts, but this way I’m teaching them self-sustainable methods of production that will allow them to continue future successes with or without the company’s help.”*

*—Mother Akuete*

**MEET THE SUPPORTED WOMEN:  
ZELIYATU IDDRISU**

Zeliyatu is from the town of Canteen, a small rural village just outside the town of Damango in the Northern Region of Ghana. She is a processor of shea butter in the Christian Women's Association.

Before Naasakle's shea butter orders, the lack of a local buying market required her to make her own shea butter soap to sell on the street. She would sell the soap for 10 pesewas each (roughly 8 cents), selling only a few per day. This was devastating to her 14 dependants, in-

cluding 9 children and 5 grandchildren, for whom she was paying for schooling.

Through Naasakle's purchase of shea butter from the association, Zeliyatu is now able to save money to put in the rural bank. This allows her to purchase health insurance, pay



school fees, and prepare for unforeseen expenses. By opening the bank account, Zeliyatu has gained enough trust to receive small loans to further her own business goals and support of her family.

**MOTHER AKUETE (CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1)**

The report also notes that women “are much less likely than men to receive education or health benefits or to have a voice in decisions affecting their lives. For them, poverty means high numbers of infant deaths, undernourished families, lack of education for children, and other serious deprivations.”



“I really wanted to do something that would keep me busy and provide assistance to the women. It’s one thing to just give handouts, but this way I’m teaching them self-sustainable methods of production that will allow them to have continued future successes with or without the company’s help,” she explained.

of women economically, but the product’s benefits provide physical benefits to all users. Even after her 60<sup>th</sup> birthday, Mother Akuete’s skin is remarkably smooth and silky, a byproduct of her consistent use of shea butter. In addition to the magical anti-aging effects of the butter, the natural ingredients are also effective in treating skin ailments such as dandruff, psoriasis, stretch marks, and burns.

Mother Akuete maintains a modest tone though, a testament to her gracious personality in addition to her belief that her work is far from finished.

Establishing a business in this area would prove to be a difficult challenge, but aiding the women of this region as well appeared impossible. Mother Akuete honed in on this demographic, focusing not only on supporting these women, but also teaching them how to be self-sustainable and improve their lives in a multitude of ways.

Her efforts have not been in vain. Today she supports and has dramatically improved the lives of over 700 women.

“It is such a great feeling when you talk to these women and realize how their lives have improved simply by organizing their production and providing them a market.”

**The Benefits of Shea Butter**

Mother Akuete’s extraordinary work does not end there. Not only have her efforts improved the lives

“I can’t contribute my success purely to luck or skill. We’ve received a lot of help from foreign organizations like USAID’s West African Trade Hub, The African Development Foundation, and the NGO Global Mamas. All these organizations have been instrumental in providing the necessary support. Without them we would have never been able to move our production facilities to the Northern Region and provide the subsequent work for them.”