

L'OCCITANE en Provence

L'OCCITANE's RESIST programme showcased at BCTA's Annual Forum

NEW YORK, NY, 27 September 2019 – L'OCCITANE en Provence attended the 9th Business Call to Action Forum 'Inclusive Business: Emerging Models, Collaboration and Innovation' to present its holistic approach to development in favour of the women shea butter producers of Burkina Faso, West Africa. Taking place on the sidelines of the United Nations General Assembly in New York City, the Forum seeks to highlight and strengthen real-world business solutions that contribute to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

L'OCCITANE is deeply committed to protecting natural resources and developing sustainable supply chains. For over 30 years, L'OCCITANE has been sourcing shea butter – one of its most iconic ingredients – from women producers in Burkina Faso. By purchasing fair-trade certified shea butter directly from these women, the brand helps them to build sustainable livelihoods and to pass on their skills from generation to generation. L'OCCITANE's business model has indirectly helped more than 200,000 people through the benefits to household members and jobs created: 75% of the women involved enrol all (or most) of their children in school and 84% of them are able to contribute to their family expenses.

In 2018, L'OCCITANE launched RESIST (**R**esilience, **E**cology, **S**trengthening, **I**ndependence, **S**tructure, **T**raining), a \$2 million project that aims to protect shea resources for 10,000 Burkinabe women producers and preserve biodiversity. The three-year programme helps to secure organic nut access by developing shea parklands and training women producers in the preservation of the shea tree. It also seeks to modernise shea processing, strengthen alternative fuel wood sources by valorising wood waste, and improve the working conditions for the women involved in the shea value chain. In addition, it boosts the women's economic emancipation by improving their access to markets and generating new activities. Overall, the programme ensures the continuity of traditional knowledge and skills and a sustainable future for the shea industry while making it more attractive for younger generations.

The RESIST programme is supported by L'OCCITANE, public donors such as USAID (thanks to Global Shea Alliance¹) and SEQUA², as well as local shea butter cooperatives. Furthermore, it relies on the technical aid of the local L'OCCITANE team in Burkina Faso and the NGO NITIDAE. The programme is recognised as 'exemplary' by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP).

Marcos Neto, UNDP Finance Sector Hub Director

'We're thrilled to see the incredible work that L'OCCITANE has continued to develop with the women of Burkina Faso. For decades, this project has led to significant societal and environmental achievements. This partnership exemplifies what the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) stand for, and we look forward to seeing how L'OCCITANE grows its inclusive business in the years to come.'

¹The Global Shea Alliance (GSA) is a non-profit industry association. Through public-private partnerships, the GSA promotes industry sustainability, quality practices and standards, and demand for shea in food and cosmetics.

² SEQUA is a non-profit development organisation appointed by the Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) to implement the developPPP.de programme, in partnership with the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) and the Deutsche Investitions- und Entwicklungsgesellschaft (DEG).

L'OCCITANE's shea butter products

Shea butter is an ideal beauty ingredient, which has been used for centuries by women in Sub-Saharan Africa to nourish and protect their skin and hair. The international success of L'OCCITANE's shea butter products can be shared with several thousand women of Burkina Faso, who are committed to developing a sustainable, fair trade shea butter supply chain. L'OCCITANE offers a complete face, body and hair care range, containing exceptionally high concentrations of shea butter.

About the Business Call to Action (BCtA)

BCtA aims to accelerate progress towards the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) by challenging companies to develop inclusive business models that engage people at the base of the economic pyramid (BoP) – people with less than US\$10 per day in purchasing power in 2015 US dollars – as consumers, producers, suppliers, distributors of goods and services and employees.

For additional information, please visit www.businesscalltoaction.org

Media contact

L'OCCITANE Group, Marianna Fellmann
+41 (0)22 561 09 30 | groupcommunication@loccitane.com

About the L'OCCITANE Group

The L'OCCITANE Group is an international group that manufactures and retails beauty and well-being products that are rich in natural and organic ingredients. A global leader in the premium beauty market, the Group has more than 3,400 retail outlets, including 1,572 owned stores, and is present in 90 countries. Through its six brands – L'OCCITANE en Provence, Melvita, Erborian, L'OCCITANE au Brésil, LimeLife and ELEMIS – the Group offers new and extraordinary beauty experiences, using high-quality products that respect nature, the environment and the people in it.

For additional information, please visit <https://group.loccitane.com>