

More Facts, Facts, Facts—from research on shea trees in Uganda

Genetic diversity — the facts



- Different shea tree varieties continuously inter-breed with each other



- Shea trees are highly genetically diverse—good for conservation

In Summary:

- Farmers' is very important in identifying variation in shea trees.
- Shea trees in Uganda are very diverse morphologically, chemically and genetically.
- This great diversity is very good for selection of individual shea trees for breeding programmes.



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Shea trees in Uganda

Information Brochure

Folk classification and perceptions — the state of knowledge

Dissemination of research findings on morphology, chemical composition and genetic variation of shea trees of Uganda

Shea trees in Uganda: diversity in tree form

Shea trees in Uganda grow into many forms



Some shea trees have porous and spreading crowns (Left)

Some shea trees have rounded crowns with sagging branches (Right)



Some trees have conical shaped crowns (above)



Shea trees in Uganda: fruit and nut diversity

Apart from observable tree form, shea tree types are also distinguished by fruit and nut diversity.

All over Uganda's shea belt, farmers can distinguish shea tree varieties on the basis of fruit and nut size and shape, pulp quantity and taste, nut color, pulp softness or hardness and tree habitat.



Left: A farmer in Adwari, Lira district showing shea fruits of different varieties

Fruit & nut shapes & colors of some varieties:



Black or dark-brown nuts:
Onia in Madi and *Enyi* in Lugbara



Ellipsoid/oval fruits or nuts:
Acula in Luo



Red-brown nuts:
Narengan in Teso

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Morphology — the facts:



- Shea trees from West Nile have averagely larger leaves
- Shea trees from northern Uganda bear larger and heavier fruits

Oil — the facts:



- All shea tree types produce a similar quantity of oil
- Uganda's shea oil contains acids good for manufacture of confectioneries

Note:

Oil content in Uganda's shea nuts has been found to be over 50% - good for serious commercial consideration