

**NAME OF THE ELEMENT:** TRADITIONAL GHANAIAAN SHEA BUTTER  
(KPABOLE)

**DOMAIN:** SOCIAL PRACTICES, RITES AND RITUALS

**COMMUNITY:** COMMUNITIES WITHIN NALERIGU, KARIGA AND GAMBAGA

**REGION:** NORTHERN REGION

The name of the ICH element is "Kpabole," also known as Shea Butter. It is a traditional product prepared by the people of Nalerigu, Kariga, Gambaga, and other northern regions of Ghana. The element is classified under the domains of Social Practices, Rites, and Rituals. The Nalerigu, Kariga, and Gambaga communities are directly associated with this practice. The element is predominantly located in Nakosigu Fong in Gambaga, where it is enacted every day.

Shea Butter processing involves a series of meticulous steps. The shea nuts are either picked or purchased from the market and cracked open. Approximately 20 kg of cracked shea nuts are roasted, cooled, and then ground. After milling, the shea paste is left overnight to rest before being poured into a large cauldron, known as "Duku." Water is added, and the mixture is stirred and beaten repeatedly to achieve a whitish consistency. This process includes intermittent water additions, and once the desired color is achieved, the paste is poured into a separate pan called "Tahala." The white oily substance is then scooped into another container, while the residue, known as "boroma" in Mampuli, is left behind. The scooped substance is then boiled and more of the mixture is added until the container is empty. After boiling for about an hour, the shea butter is left to cool and solidify, making it ready for use.

Madam Rahamatu Dahamani is the primary practitioner directly involved in the shea butter process. Other people from the community, such as family members or apprentices, may assist with various tasks but are less directly involved in the core process. The language of communication used during the practice is Mampruli, a local language. Several tangible elements are associated with this practice, including the Nagma, Gigiga, and various tools like the roasting pot ("Kpam chim duko"), stirring stick ("Vugre"), and pans ("Tahalas," "Sagbu Kukcka"). The special pestle for cracking nuts ("Balugeri") and the cracking stone ("Kugre") are also vital to the practice.

The customary practices surrounding shea butter processing involve a strong sense of community interaction and the transmission of indigenous knowledge from one generation to the next. Access to this practice does not have any specific restrictions or customary governance. The practice is transmitted through oral transmission, participation, and socialization, especially from mothers to children.

Currently, there are no significant threats to the continued enactment or transmission of the shea butter processing tradition within the concerned communities. Likewise, no threats have been identified concerning the

sustainability of the tangible elements or resources used in the practice. Furthermore, the viability of intangible heritage elements, such as songs sung during the work, remains strong.

To safeguard the future of this cultural practice, there are ongoing partnerships involving the National Folklore Board (NFB), the National Commission on Culture (NCC), the Centre for National Culture (CNC), and UNESCO. These partnerships aim to encourage the continued enactment and transmission of this ICH element.

Verbal consent was obtained from the community before data collection commenced. There are no restrictions on the use or access to the information collected. The resource persons involved include Madam Rahamatu Dahamani and Alhassan Yakubu Inusah (Interpreter). The data was collected during interviews held on the 3rd and 4th of December, 2023, in Nakosigu Fong, Gambaga, with time slots ranging from early morning to evening.

**CONSENT:** COMMUNITIES WITHIN NALERIGU, KARIGA AND GAMBAGA  
**SUBMITTED BY:** NATIONAL FOLKLORE BOARD