

Our experience

 BENIN

Cuso International's work in Benin centers on fostering social inclusion and strengthening economic resilience, particularly for women and marginalized groups. The **SHARE** project, funded by Global Affairs Canada, focuses on advancing women's land rights, promoting sustainable economic activities, and supporting female entrepreneurship. These initiatives aim to create systemic change through partnerships with local organizations and community leaders.

- Build capacity for women to secure land rights and engage in economic opportunities
- Collaborate with 15 local partners and deploy 23 volunteers, positively impacting over 12,017 participants
- Strengthen pathways for female entrepreneurship and sustainable practices in local communities



Key activities

- **Enhancing women's land rights:** Delivered training and advocacy initiatives to 22 representatives and their families, fostering collaboration with community leaders to advance women's ownership of rural land
- **Transforming invasive plants into livelihoods:** Partnering with women to create eco-friendly products from invasive plants, generating sustainable income streams
- **Advancing youth female entrepreneurship:** Providing vocational training and business start-up support to vulnerable young women, equipping them with skills for small-scale business development

Achievements and metrics

- **Local partnerships:** Engaged 15 local organizations to build organizational capacity in communications, marketing, project management, and youth mentoring
- **Direct reach:** Benefited 12,017 individuals directly, with a focus on gender equity and inclusion. Enabled 150 women to obtain customary ownership certificates for their land
- **Sustainable outcomes:** Supported the creation of sustainable livelihoods and improved social and economic well-being for participants

Program highlights

Advocacy in action

Through the Reinforcement of Women's Leadership in Rural Land Tenure initiative, participants successfully advocated for systemic changes in land rights policies. Local leaders and influential community members now recognize women's critical role in land ownership and rural development.

Economic and social impact

SHARE participants in Benin reported significant improvements in economic independence and social inclusion, contributing to broader community resilience.

CASE STUDY

Reinforcing leadership in rural land tenure

In partnership with UFeC, the project trained 22 representatives and their spouses to lead advocacy actions targeting community leaders and decision-makers. This initiative sparked results, such as:

- Recognition of women's rights to inherit and own land
- Strengthened community dialogue on equitable land distribution

Global context and SHARE alignment

The Benin program is part of the broader SHARE initiative that operates across 10 countries. SHARE emphasizes:

- Gender equality and social inclusion
- Sustainable livelihoods
- Environmentally friendly development practices

In 2023-2024, the SHARE project:

- Reached 155,258 direct participants across its global footprint
- Engaged 141 volunteers (field and virtual) to support sustainable development solutions
- Delivered measurable improvements in participants' social and economic well-being

Supporting women through practical innovations

Benin's program aligns with SHARE's larger mission to equip communities with sustainable tools and practices:

- **Eco-basketry:** Training women artisans to repurpose invasive plants into marketable goods, reducing environmental harm while creating economic opportunities
- **Collaborative networks:** Establishing partnerships with local governments and community organizations to ensure long-term sustainability and local ownership

Program structure and team

The Benin program is managed by a dynamic team of local leaders, regional managers, and Cuso volunteers. This collaborative structure ensures that initiatives are context-specific and responsive to the unique needs of Benin's communities.

Additional resources

For a comprehensive look at SHARE's impact, including stories of transformation and detailed metrics, access the SHARE Gratitude Report 2023-2024. The report highlights the program's successes in Benin and other countries and provides insights into the power of partnerships to create sustainable change.