

Good Evening Friends of Alaffia,

It is my wish that this note finds you and your family in good health. I am writing to say hello and to briefly share with you what I have been up to these past few months. This year, I have visited Togo more often than any other time since we started Alaffia. Last week, I returned from my fourth trip this year, and next week I will return for another six weeks. My frequent visits are due to overseeing Alaffia community projects and expansion of our collective cooperatives. Your continuing support has led to the growth and sales of our brands, Alaffia, EveryDay Shea, EveryDay Coconut, Good Soap and Beautiful Curls, which has enabled us to expand our community initiatives. As the reach of our initiatives grows, so does the need for me to be on the ground to ensure the most disadvantaged members of the community receive the positive impact. However, my October trip was also for two very specific purposes.

First, I had the honor to host a delegation of donors and leaders of the Whole Planet Foundation, which provides microfinance funding to our communities in Togo and throughout the world. I had the opportunity to share Alaffia's model and activities on the ground with other leaders from the natural products industry, including Papyrus, Reserpage, and Seventh Generation. Our hope was to show that the Alaffia model of empowering humanity's most vulnerable in Togo and in the USA through the economic process can break the chain of poverty. Not only did we tour the Alaffia Artisan Center, Community Projects Headquarters and "Alaffia Village" (Alaffia Shea Butter Cooperative), but we also visited our Maternal Health center in Bassar, Alaffia schools under construction, and our shea nut gathering communities. The keystone event was a welcoming ceremony attended by a couple thousand community recipients and cooperative members at the Alaffia Village. The speech excerpt below was delivered by a student representing all the recipients of our bicycles, school supplies, and school buildings.

We were also honored by the presence of Mr. Peter Barlerin, the Charge des Affairs (acting Ambassador) of the United States to Togo and the US Embassy's Community Liaison Officer, Elizabeth Newton, during the Whole Planet tour of Alaffia Village and Artisan Center. Mr. Barlerin's regular position is the Director of the Office of Economic and Regional Affairs within the Bureau of African Affairs at the U.S. Department of State. Therefore, his visit was a special opportunity for me to share with him how state department policies can influence and encourage job prospects and growth in West Africa.

Second, for the past several years, we have been researching and developing a way to bring biogas to Togo. Biogas technology produces combustible gas from organic waste

products, and is an underused source of clean and renewable energy in West Africa. Installing a biogas digester was a priority of Alaffia's in order to meet our objective of reaching 100% energy sustainability in our shea butter production.

With the greatest joy in my heart, I am happy to inform you we began constructing two biogas digesters, which will turn all the byproduct from making our shea butter into biogas, providing heat and energy for all our needs in traditional shea butter, coconut oil, and black soap crafting. A team of Ugandan and Togo engineers and masons are joining forces and hands to realize this project, and for me personally, it is encouraging to witness Africans putting their hands and resources together to create an everlasting, sustainable solution to an African problem.

As with all things Alaffia, our biogas project in reality is not just about providing sustainable energy for Alaffia, instead it is about using Alaffia as a platform to bring biogas as an energy solution to Togo. Alaffia's goal is to construct biogas digesters in schools throughout Togo and West Africa to turn human waste into energy for lighting and pumping clean water for students. Today, 98% of schools do not have lighting or potable water, furthering the difficulty of our youth to learn and succeed. The ultimate result will be a well-informed and educated generation in our African communities enabling us to control our own destiny, freedom and potential.

Next week, I will be in Togo again to help with the final construction of our biogas digesters, and when I return to the USA in January, I will update you on the progress. I wish there was a way to express how grateful we are for your support of Alaffia, as it is your support that enables us to continue to serve our communities. During our welcome ceremony for the Whole Planet visitors last month, a longtime friend and Alaffia's Director of Internal Control and Transparency, Mr. Abel Adje, said in the final words of his speech "It is not what you have already done for Alaffia, nor what Alaffia has done; it is what we have not yet done." On this note, I look forward to the years ahead to do what we have not yet done and together bring about dignity to every part of our communities. Be it that you are a custodian who leaves your family behind every night to clean the store so it's presentable to customers in the morning, a store owner or executive, sales representative, buyer, shelf-stocker or receiver and so on, my hope is we will continue together to do what we have not yet done to bring peace, freedom and economic equality to all humankind.

On behalf of all of us at Alaffia and those you have touched, I wish you a joyous and peaceful holiday season.

Humbly yours,
Olowo-n'djo
Olowo-n'djo Tchala
Founder & CEO