

There are thousands of incredible women business owners in Eastern Africa and elsewhere; each with a unique story.

Episode 4: Suzanna Mushabe Haarbosch – Caio Shea Butter Uganda Ltd.

Suzanna Mushabe Haarbosch is Co-Founder and Managing Director of Caio Shea Butter Uganda Ltd., a social enterprise producing premium, unrefined Nilotica shea butter, shea butter cosmetics and skincare products. Suzanna and her business partner Semine Lykke Brorson founded Caio in 2015. Their intent was to increase the incomes earned by the women in Northern Uganda who harvest shea nuts and produce shea nut butter using traditional methods. The women producers however, lacked access to markets. Caio fills that gap. Caio purchases shea nuts from the women who harvest them and runs a production facility for Nilotica shea butter that meets international food grade standards. The shea tree is indigenous to Africa and occurs naturally in the wild. Its fruit (the shea nut and seed) has been a source of nutrition, and skin care products in the communities where the tree grows for hundreds of years. A mature tree produces and sheds fruit once a year, for up to 200 years. Caio works with 1,000 shea nut suppliers in Northern Uganda, primarily women and employs 17 people.

What you'll hear in this episode:

- Caio's products: a shea butter ingredient line and three retail product lines; each targeting a different geographic market.
- The interesting characteristics, qualities and uses of the shea nut tree and shea butter.
- Funding sources: founder savings, investors and searching for venture capital and impact investors.
- How Caio gives back to its communities of shea nut suppliers.
- Challenges in obtaining shea butter certification from the Uganda National Bureau of Standards (UNBS) and the resulting limitations on exporting to neighbouring East African countries.
- Caio's current export and potential markets. The prohibitive transport costs to Denmark, Germany and the Netherlands.
- Challenge: How to tell the positive Nilotica Shea Butter story effectively.
- Suzanna's joy in improving the lives of Caio's suppliers and her desire to contribute to a positive Africa narrative through Caio products.
- Lessons learned: Focus on your goal, have clear guiding principles, be flexible in execution and keep innovating.
- Words of inspiration: "Follow your dream; but it must be bigger than just making money!"

Useful Resources

Website: <http://www.caio.dk/>
<http://floranilotica.com>

We would love to hear from you:

Website: www.bizchatshub.com
E-mail: info@bizchatshub.com
Twitter: @bizchatshub