**L’OCCITANE JOINS THE 9TH ANNUAL BUSINESS CALL TO ACTION (BCtA) FORUM AT THE UNITED NATIONS GENERAL ASSEMBLY**

**September 26, 2019 (NEW YORK, NY)** – L’Occitane en Provence will attend the ninth annual Business Call to Action Forum, “Inclusive Business: Emerging Models, Collaboration and Innovation,” during the United Nations General Assembly this week. The panel will highlight different ways innovators can work towards building a more sustainable and inclusive global economy in the future.

During the Forum, panelist Justine Humbert from the Sustainability and Biodiversity Department, along with Jean-Charles Lhommet, Sustainability and Biodiversity Manager, and Abou Tagnan, Local Team Manager from Burkina Faso, will present the RESIST (Resilience, Ecology, Strengthening, Independence, Structure, Training) program to spotlight the brand’s commitment to empowering women. L’Occitane launched the $2 million project in 2018 to improve the conditions for more than 10,000 women of Burkina Faso, supported by donors such as USAID and SEQUA[[1]](#footnote-1) and in partnership with the NGO NITIDAE and the Global Shea Alliance.

“We are honored to be at the BCtA Forum and immensely proud of our accomplishments with the RESIST program and our partnership with the women of Burkina Faso the past 30 years. Our most loved Shea Butter is only possible thanks to the women in Burkina Faso, West Africa, who produce this nourishing staple. We strive to support our partners and promote a holistic approach in the development of natural ingredients,” said Jean-Charles Lhommet. “Since the inception of L’Occitane, sustainability, traceability and empowerment have been at our core.”

The RESIST program objectives include:

* *Natural resource protection*: Secure organic nut access for the women via parklands where biodiversity is preserved. With this, women are trained to learn techniques to preserve the Shea trees and improve production
* *Improve sustainability of the Shea Butter process*: Ensure more environmentally sustainable processes and improve the conditions of work for the women, which leads to improving the quality of Shea Butter
* *Governance:* Strengthen the governance of the unions with the women and improve the understanding and access to markets
* *Diversify income for women:* Generate new income activities for the women in order to be more economically stable

In an effort to protect natural resources, women, and biodiversity, L’Occitane has been purchasing locally produced Shea Butter directly from the women rather than through intermediaries. This business model has affected more than 200,000 people, granting 75% of women to register all (or most) of their children for school and 84% of the women the ability to contribute to their family expenses.

In addition, the program protects and preserves its natural resource – the Shea tree – threatened by urbanization and conventional agriculture. This is why L’Occitane collaborates with the women of Burkina Faso and local authorities to identity and protect Shea nut areas, secure communal forests where Shea trees grow and ensure 100% organic production.

“As a BCtA member since 2013, we’re thrilled to continue seeing the incredible work that L’Occitane has developed with the women of Burkina Faso. For decades this project has made significant societal and environmental achievements,” said Marcos Neto, United Nations Development Programme Finance Sector Hub Director. “This partnership exemplifies what the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) stands for, and we look forward to seeing how they grow their inclusive business in the years to come.”

For additional information, please contact www.businesscalltoaction.org, or visit usa.loccitane.com. Join the conversation on Instagram at @loccitaneusa #LoveLoccitane.

**ABOUT L’OCCITANE EN PROVENCE**

Founded by Oliver Baussan 40 years ago, L’OCCITANE captures the true art de vivre of Provence, offering a sensorial immersion in the natural beauty and lifestyle of the South of France. From the texture of L’OCCITANE products to the scent, each skincare, body care and fragrance formula promises pleasure through beauty and well-being – a moment rich in employment and discovery that goes beyond tangible benefits to create a different experience of Provence. L’OCCITANE products are available at usa.loccitane.com and in 200+ boutiques throughout the U.S.

Shea Butter is an ideal beauty ingredient which has been used for centuries by women in Sub-saharan Africa to nourish and protect their skin and hair. The international success of L’Occitane’s Shea Butter products can be shared with several thousand Burkina women, who are committed to developing a sustainable, fair trade Shea Butter supply chain. Discover our complete face, body and hair care offer, containing exceptionally high concentrations of Shea Butter.

**ABOUT BCtA**

Business Call to Action (BCtA) aims to accelerate progress towards the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) by challenging companies to develop inclusive business models that engage people at the base of the economic pyramid (BoP) – people with less than US$10 per day in purchasing power in 2015 US dollars – as consumers, producers, suppliers, distributors of goods and services and employees. Find out more at [www.businesscalltoaction.org](http://www.businesscalltoaction.org)

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1. funded by the German Federal Government, Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ), via sequa as part of the develoPPP.de program [↑](#footnote-ref-1)