WHOLE FOODS MARKET
TEAM MEMBER VOLUNTEER PROGRAM
2019 SUMMARY & IMPACT REPORT: TOGO
Whole Planet Foundation (WPF) funds microlending programs through Entrepreneurs du Monde’s program, Assilassimé Solidarité, in Togo where Alaffia sources Shea butter, baskets and artisan goods which are sold in Whole Foods Market (WFM) stores. WPF is a WFM non-profit whose mission is to alleviate poverty by funding microlending programs where WFM sources products as a way to alleviate poverty and give back to our global communities.

Through the Whole Foods Market Team Member Volunteer Program, WFM gives Team Members the unique opportunity to travel abroad with WPF to learn about WPF, see where and how WFM products are grown, provide community service, experience and learn from other cultures and challenge themselves by exploring exciting countries around the globe.
The team traveled to Sokodé to learn about the Shea butter Alaffia sources for their bodycare products sold in WFM stores. They helped Alaffia with the Djama School Project, building a kindergarten and a latrine in nearby Kambole.

The volunteers traveled to Atakpamé to visit the Amlame branch of Assilassimé Solidarité, to meet rural microcredit clients whose loans were funded by Whole Planet Foundation.

TMs traveled to Koutammakou, a UNESCO World Heritage site. To learn about Togolese history and culture.

WFM TM Volunteers flew to Lomé to meet with Alaffia staff and they stayed in their compound. The volunteers visited WPF’s local partner Assilassimé Solidarité started by Entrepreneurs du Monde.
2019 TOGO SUMMARY

11 WFM Team Member Volunteers traveled to Lomé in Togo to visit Assilassimé Solidarité, Whole Planet Foundation’s microlending partner. They met staff members and microcredit clients whose loans were funded by Whole Planet Foundation in Lomé and also met rural clients outside of the capital city in Atakpamé at the Amlame branch office of Assilassimé Solidarité. The team members traveled to Sokodé where they learned about Shea butter production and processing with Alaffia, which is used in bodycare products for sale in WFM stores. The team learned about Alaffia’s many social initiatives through which they support their community and helped Alaffia to build a kindergarten and a latrine, funded by Whole Foods Market with Alaffia. They learned about Togolese culture, food, traditions and dance.

TEAM
Jodi St. John (Florida Region, Regional Office)
Nichele Lindstrom (Global, Global Office)
Catherine Kiely (Mid-Atlantic Region, Louisville Store)
Emmeline Fowler (Midwest Region, Birmingham Store)
Meghan Higgins (North Atlantic Region, Nashua Store)
Tatiana Kali Rivera (Southern Pacific Region, Laguna Niguel Store)
Melinda Nguyen (Global, Global Office)
Joseph Hussey (Rocky Mountain Region, SouthGlenn Store)
Sarah Hurtado (Rocky Mountain Region, Highland Ranch Store)
Andres Traslavina (Global, Global Office)
Jaline Tessier (North Atlantic, Newtonville Store)

GROUP COORDINATOR
JoAnne Brenner

TOGO GUIDE
JoAnne Brenner

PROJECT COORDINATORS
Olowo-n’djo Tchala
JoAnne Brenner

WFM TEAM MEMBER VOLUNTEER PROGRAM MANAGER
Genie Bolduc
2019 TOGO ITINERARY
SEPTEMBER 22 –OCTOBER 5

ITINERARY- 2 WEEKS

Day 1 - Sunday, September 22 - Departed the U.S.

Day 2 - Monday, September 23 - Arrived in Lomé and were welcomed to the Alaffia compound.

Day 3- Tuesday, September 24 - The team had a tour of Woode House, a UNESCO Heritage site, the Alaffia Lomé office and the Lomé Artisan Market.

Day 4 - Wednesday, September 25 - Volunteers visited with Whole Planet Foundation microlending partner Assilassimé Solidarité, attended a group meeting and lunched at a restaurant owned by a microcredit client whose loan was funded by WPF. In the afternoon they visited a fabric market and welcomed a visit from a tailor who would make them clothing from the West African batik they bought.

Day 5 - Thursday, September 26 - The team left for Atakpamé to see rural microfinance funded by Whole Planet Foundation and meet farmers at the Amlamé microfinance branch. They continued on to Sokodé.

Day 6 - Friday, September 27 - The volunteers visited Alaffia Foundation’s Community Projects, and Queen Alaffia. They had lunch in founder Olowo-n’djo Tchala’s office and did various activities in the afternoon including African wax printing, assisting bike mechanics, or helping gardeners or kitchen staff.

Day 7 - Saturday, September 28 - They departed for Kambole to visit KOUSSOUTOU Health Center and headed to the Djama School Project site for an introduction and safety equipment issuance and explanation.

Day 8 - Sunday, September 29 - TMs traveled to Kara to see Koutammakou, a UNESCO World Heritage site.

Day 9 - Monday, September 30 - The TM Volunteers traveled to Kambole for the Djama School Project.

Day 10 - Tuesday, October 1 - The TM Volunteers traveled to Kambole for the Djama School Project.

Day 11 - Wednesday, October 2 - The TM Volunteers traveled to Kambole for the Djama School Project.

Day 12 - Thursday, October 3 - The team said goodbye and left for Lomé. The tailor delivered their custom clothing and the team celebrated their last night at the beach with a bonfire and music.

Day 13 - Friday, October 4 - In the morning and late afternoon the WFM TMs were dropped off at the airport to travel home.

Day 14 - Saturday, October 5 - The volunteers arrived home.
Team Members attended a center meeting, ate lunch at a client’s restaurant whose loan was funded by Whole Planet Foundation through Assilassimé Solidarité program, and met individual microcredit clients like Ame.

They learned about the process of receiving and repaying a loan, spoke with microlending staff and met microcredit clients like Ali.

Whole Planet Foundation has supported Entrepreneurs du Monde's program, Assilassimé Solidarité, since 2016, funding $1 million to support their microlending programs in Togo. Assilassimé Solidarité has a 97% repayment rate and WPF is funding 10,055 new borrowers, helping to grow their basic group loan portfolio (called the ‘fraternité' loan program) from 4,764 in March 2015 to 19,480 clients in September 2019.*

*As of 09/31/2019
The WFM Team Member Volunteers traveled to Atakpamé to visit the Amlame branch of Whole Planet Foundation's microlending partner Entrepreneurs du Monde, learning from staff and microcredit clients about rural microlending methodology, goals, challenges and successes.

Whole Planet Foundation’s Regional Director of West Africa and the Middle East, Brian Doe, helped to translate and share information from Assilassimé Solidarité program staff and clients whose loans were funded by Whole Planet Foundation.
ALAFFIA HAS DONATED $317,145 TO ALLEVIATE POVERTY THROUGH WHOLE PLANET FOUNDATION

Alaffia pledged $25,000 in 2019 as a supplier partner to Whole Planet Foundation in empowering entrepreneurs through microcredit. Alaffia sources Shea butter, baskets and artisan goods in Togo. As of December 31, 2019, Alaffia has donated $317,145 to fund 5,193 microloans to create 27,964 opportunities. Alaffia shares: “Alaffia’s Social Enterprise Model is a comprehensive approach to providing safe, efficacious hair, face and body care while alleviating poverty in West Africa through the preservation of traditional skills and knowledge in the global market.” To learn more about Alaffia, their products, their empowerment projects and their positive impact visit their website at https://www.alaffia.com.

LEARNING ABOUT ALAFFIA

Team Member Volunteers were given the most amazing welcome to the Alaffia compounds in both Lomé and Sokodé. It takes many people to orchestrate a trip like this involving people from varied backgrounds with various dietary restrictions, some of whom have not been outside of the United States, much less traveled to such a remote part of Africa. The team stayed in the Alaffia compounds and were treated with fabulous meals, beautiful places to stay and of course, the best in body care products. They learned about Alaffia’s production and their empowerment projects.

Members of the Alaffia team with WFM TM Melinda: Ibada Tchala, Bake Omando Tchala (Navi), Melinda and Hortense Koffi. To the right above is Olowo-n’djo Tchala who founded Alaffia with his wife Prairie Rose Hyde.
The WFM Team Member Volunteers learned about Shea butter production for Alaffia’s body care products which are sold in Whole Foods Market stores.
The volunteers visited Alaffia’s bicycle repair shop and learned about Alaffia’s initiative to provide bicycles as transportation, as well as bicycle repair.

Team members learned about Alaffia’s commitment to empowering women through several initiatives including Maternal Health Clinics.

“Alaffia is an incredibly inspiring organization. They've created an interconnected ecosystem of products, sourcing methods and community projects that truly represent conscious capitalism at its best. Alaffia sources critical ingredients for its beauty and body care products from West Africa. To ensure the ingredients are of the highest quality and that they have full transparency in their supply chain, they've created cooperatives where communities harvest and process raw ingredients. To support these cooperatives, they've invested in community projects (maternal health, childhood education and education access, environmental education) to ensure a sustainable, scalable and supported workforce. It's truly inspiring to have seen all of these elements in action, and the deep interconnectedness Alaffia fosters with communities in Togo, Ghana, and beyond. They've taken the idea of Shared Fate to an amazing place.”
TM Volunteer Nichele

EMPOWERMENT PROJECTS
Alaffia’s Empowerment Projects are “targeted areas of development (Maternal Care, Education, Environmental Sustainability, Eyeglasses) that safeguard basic needs for sustainable communities.” To learn about Alaffia’s Social Enterprise model, visit: https://www.alaffia.com/pages/social-enterprise-model.
JOEY

“It was the best thing I’ve done in my life. We built a school and it was amazing to be a part of the for the kids. Such a special memory in my life.”

TATIANA

“I think I found my life’s purpose. I learned that Alaffia is a company I can trust. They are a very genuine family operated business. They influence their community tremendously. I learned how blessed I am. I am so thankful for all that I have, the experience, the people, and my friends at Alaffia. I will tell about my experience in Africa my whole life. I will never forget them and It's not over. I will let my life be a beacon of hope and light for them.”

JODI

“I have made some incredible friendships on this journey. Ten other people and I now share a story that not many others will ever have. It’s one thing to read on a products package all of the amazing things Alaffia does and the pride they have for their products. It’s a very different thing to see all of the amazing things they do and experience that pride for yourself. I am very grateful to have been selected for this incredible journey.”

EMMELINE

“Seeing and meeting with the very grateful loan recipients was life changing, Not only money is provided but also follow up, resources, knowledge and savings programs are offered.”

NICHELE

“We visited rural farming clients. One of the most amazing stories was a group of farmers who met each other through the microcredit program. Though they’d lived in the same community and worked near each other for many years, they had never helped each other before. Now that they are part of the same group of microcredit clients, they support each other -- from providing advice, to even pitching in with farming tasks. I thought this was an amazing example of how microcredit can not only empower individuals and families, but also can create and foster community.”

ANDRES

“This was a life changing opportunity. I am very proud to work at Whole Foods Market and feel fortunate to have been chosen by Global and Whole Planet Foundation to participate on this trip. I felt part of something much bigger than myself and this is why Whole Foods Market and Whole Planet Foundation are positively impacting the world.”

SARAH

“I got to spend time immersed in a community I likely would've never had exposure to. My life will be forever changed because of my WFM Team Member Volunteer Program in Togo with Alaffia opportunity.”
2019 TOGO WFM TM VOLUNTEER PROGRAM IMPACT

11 TEAM MEMBERS TRAVELED TO TOGO
6 MICROCREDIT CLIENTS VISITED
1 KINDERGARTEN BUILDING CONSTRUCTED
1 LATRINE BUILT

2 MICROCREDIT CENTER MEETINGS ATTENDED
300+ SCHOOL SUPPLIES DONATED
200+ MEDICAL SUPPLIES DONATED
25 SOCCER GAMES PLAYED

WHOLE PLANET FOUNDATION