living
life
IN FULL COLOR

2016 ANNUAL REPORT
TO our SUPPORTERS

2016 was a year of recovery for us and we are grateful to all of you who have been on this ride with us. This was the first year of sales growth since 2013, in part due to the economic setbacks across West Africa resulting from the Ebola crisis. With a 5.1% increase in sales, we ended the year with $905,600 in total sales, 31% of which was paid to the Mamas in wages — a number we are always proud of! We are also proud of the goals we achieved this year and we feel humbled to be able to share stories of recognition, expansion, and accomplishments. You can see some of our highlights from the year on the facing page, as well as more in-depth stories covering our most exciting achievements throughout this report.

One improvement we are delighted to share is our focus on goal setting and tracking in 2016. For the first year in our history, we decided to tie bonuses to goal achievement! We know, it sounds so elementary when it comes to business, but it was a big shift for our culture. Our leadership team came together and decided on five crucial goals on which to focus: reduce debt, increase sales, start production on time, reduce overstock to manageable levels, and improve quality through our First Class First Time project (which you can read about in our 2015 report). The staff was thrilled that we met four of our goals resulting in an 80% bonus (that is 80% of monthly salary for our Ghanaian employees).

Through our First Class First Time project, we not only achieved our goals of 90% first class batiks and 99.5% first class sewn products, but also the Mamas were rewarded with a 10% bonus each month that they met the goal. It was wonderful to see during our annual interviews that this money is being invested back into the community and toward the future. This year the Mamas supported 198 people outside of their immediate family. On top of sending 100% of their own children to school, the Mamas sent an additional 117 children to school! 46% of the Mamas were also able to put money into savings. You can see more achievements on pages 10-11.

We leave 2016 feeling energetic and hopeful for continued growth. One goal that is very close on our horizon (and has us so thrilled!) is to transition to organic fabric. We also have dreams to grow our team by filling strategic positions in both Ghana and the U.S. And, of course, we are dedicated to continuing our focus on sales growth so that we can maintain our commitment to prosperity within the entire Global Mamas community. We appreciate your continued partnership in achieving our mission.

Best wishes,

Renate & Kristin

2016 HIGHLIGHTS

FEBRUARY · GUARANTEED FAIR TRADE After an extensive vetting process and week-long, in-person audit, the World Fair Trade Organization granted Global Mamas the status of Guaranteed Fair Trade.

JUNE · REALIZING DREAMS With income from Global Mamas and the support from our SMART Goals program, seamstress Vidah Ankrah realized her dream of moving into her own home after spending three years building the house.

JULY · CELEBRATING NEW PARTNERSHIPS In 2016, Gabi Ludwig of handtrade became our European partner helping to grow demand for the products of Global Mamas across Europe. Gabi visited Ghana for the first time in July giving her a chance to meet the Mamas in person.

AUGUST · INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION Two members of our leadership team, Patience Treve and Gladys Adimer, traveled to Dortmund, Germany, at the invitation of the German government. They were both incredibly excited as this was their first journey outside of Africa. Patience & Gladys made market connections, visited customers, and enjoyed German culture.

OCTOBER · RECOGNIZING HARD WORK & TALENT Beadmakers Grace Doku and Moses Buernortey are voted Mama and Papa of the year.

SEPTEMBER · BUILDING FUTURES Over the past years, batiker Elizabeth Asem financed her daughter Perfect’s education to become a nurse. We are thrilled to report that Perfect graduated from nursing school in September.

DECEMBER · ACHIEVING OUR GOALS Batiker Martha Rhule takes her quality very seriously. In 2016, she achieved 95% First Class, First Time — well above our goal of 90%. This is quite amazing given the unpredictable nature of the art of batik. Her hard work paid off as the First Class, First Time bonus increased her annual income earned from Global Mamas by 22%.
A significant accomplishment of 2016 was becoming a guaranteed member of the World Fair Trade Organization (WFTO). While Global Mamas has been a proud member of the WFTO for nearly a decade, our upgraded status gives our customers and donors a highly sought seal of approval from a truly credible organization. As Guaranteed Fair Trade members, we were fully audited and our business practices were found to be in full compliance with all TEN of the WFTO fair trade principals.

Following that, Peris verified how the principles of fair trade were implemented at our locations across Ghana. This external review provided an excellent opportunity to tweak existing systems and ensure all aspects of our operations fall in line with WFTO guidelines. One area of improvement for Global Mamas was to better document the safety guidelines that were being practiced in our facilities. We also improved office safety by displaying exit signs and ensuring all fire extinguishers are up to date. The Mamas were also provided with re-fresh trainings on the use of safety equipment. “Overall it was a very intense experience, but it was a way to learn from Peris so that we can have continuous improvement in our operations,” says Patience Treee, People Development Manager. Patience believes that being a WFTO Guaranteed Fair Trade organization will have a highly positive impact on the future of Global Mamas, especially in Europe. “The impact of being guaranteed will be great now that the world is moving from products that are not fair trade to embracing fair trade products. Consumers will know that Global Mamas producers are treated fairly and earn a living wage. Having the label gives our customers security that they are buying responsibly and increases their confidence in Global Mamas.”

The first part of the process required members of the Global Mamas leadership team to complete a Self Assessment Report (or SAR) documenting how we practice fair trade in our production. The completed document was nearly 50 pages long. Once the SAR had been thoroughly reviewed by WFTO staff, Global Mamas was visited by Peris Ochieng, a WFTO auditor, in January 2016. Peris spent a week auditing Global Mamas, carefully assessing each step of the process. The audit started with a meeting of key leaders in Cape Coast.

The Mamas are...realizing the benefits of these relationships through increased orders.

handtrade

For Global Mamas to succeed in Europe it was clear we needed to find a partner who not only shared our values, but also had the expertise to introduce our brand to the EU market. In early 2016, we learned that a long time customer from Germany, Gabi Ludwig, had opened her own company to distribute organic and fair trade clothing and accessories. Gabi was already representing Amanta, a gorgeous line of alpaca wool clothing from Bolivia. The Global Mamas collection was a perfect complement in both seasonality and style. Renae Adam and Kristin Johnson, co-founders of Global Mamas, visited Gabi in February 2016 at her studio in Backnang, Germany, to work out the details and the partnership was born. In April of 2016, Gabi imported her first shipment and distributed orders to nearly twenty customers throughout Europe. In July Gabi made a visit to Ghana where she met the Mamas for the first time. She also shared European style preferences as the Global Mamas design team finalized the 2017 product line. Gabi cares deeply about the people behind the companies she represents and we feel very lucky to be one of them!

FAIR TRADE FINEST

Another partnership that has assisted our expansion into the EU is the “Fair Trade Finest” program from the Center for the Promotion of Imports. Global Mamas was honored to be selected for the program, which kicked into action in 2016. CBI, funded by the Netherlands Ministry of Foreign Affairs, contributes to sustainable and inclusive economic development through the expansion of exports from developing countries to Europe. Through this program, which is a joint initiative between CBI and the Dutch Association of Wereldwinkels (world shops) in cooperation with the WFTO, Global Mamas receives expert coaching focused on developing products for the European marketplace. Throughout 2016 the Global Mamas design team worked with CBI coach Mark Kwami to develop a new home décor collection that was on trend and cohesive in terms of colors and prints. We look forward to growing our partnership with CBI over the next few years.

EZA

Global Mamas is also delighted to partner with EZA to make our recycled glass jewelry available to shops across Europe. Founded in 1975, EZA is considered the “pioneer of fair trade in Austria.” After proving our ability to deliver high quality products in prior years, in 2016 we were thrilled to become an official EZA Fair Trade Partner. Achieving this status deepens the commitment between EZA and Global Mamas and provides the Mamas with the security of knowing they can count on a long-term partnership – a critical aspect to trading fairly.
Each year we celebrate the Mama who most exemplified our values in the last year: strength of community, long-term commitment, innovation, economic self-sufficiency, and creating positive change. This year we had not one, but two winners: Grace Doku and Moses Buernortey. They are a brother and sister beadmaking team that lives and works a short distance from our Krobo office. Their fellow beadmakers say that Grace and Moses are kind, open, hardworking people with whom they enjoy working. Of working with Global Mamas, Grace and Moses say “Global Mamas really makes our lives better.”

Beadmaking is a family skill in their area and the siblings have been in the family business for thirty years. Grace says that the award is recognition to her that they are hard workers and they have been motivated by Global Mamas. She wants to be a role model to others, so that they can see how far they can go in life.

Global Mamas really makes our lives better.

Grace and Moses have been making beads for Global Mamas for ten years, ever since Global Mamas started operations in Krobo. According to Grace, prior to working with Global Mamas they received little money for their work and sometimes those who “bought” their beads did not pay them. Since joining Global Mamas they get paid on time and have plenty of orders. The financial security also gives them confidence when making decisions about expanding their business.

In their workshop, Grace and Moses produce thousands of beads every week, assisted by apprentices from the area. The process can take many days depending on the complexity of the design. Grace says that her favorite part of the beadmaking process is taking the beads out of the mold and assembling them on a string before delivering them to Global Mamas. She used to do all aspects of the process, including creating the beads, applying the more complex designs, and firing the pieces. Now she’s delegating these tasks to apprentices to allow the business to grow. Grace says she plans to continue being a beadmaker as long as her health allows. It makes her happy to think that her beads are being worn by women all around the world.
REALIZING DREAMS

**Mama Accomplishments Shine in 2016**

**CHRISTIANA ASARE** has been working for Global Mamas for four years as a seamstress. In 2016, she was able to send her youngest daughter, three-year-old Belinda, to kindergarten. Christiana says: “It makes me very, very happy to see Belinda going to kindergarten.” Christiana’s twin boys are also in school. She hopes that all her children will be able to take their education further, and perhaps Belinda may even become a nurse one day.

**MARY KOOMSON** has been helping to pay for her nephew Osborne’s school fees for the past few years. In 2016, he graduated from high school. “When he started school I began helping his parents with the fees.” Mary states, “I feel very proud of him. He wants to continue his education and enter university, but first he wants to work to earn some money. My family was very happy that I could help. School fees are very high in Ghana; many children don’t finish senior high school.”

**SUZZY KORSAH**, a Quality Controller & Batiker Champion, enrolled in vocational school to learn the trade of catering. “This is something that I’ve wished to do. I will be able to use my hands to make pastries and cakes.” Suzzy says, “In the future I would love to have my own restaurant.” Suzzy is a full-time staff member at our Cape Coast location, checking the quality of products before they are exported. After a full day of work, she attends school until 7pm, Monday through Friday. She is excited to complete her schooling in 2017.

**MARTHA RHULE**, the Global Mama of the Year in 2014, has begun supporting her twin nieces to attend Cape Coast Polytechnic. Her nieces, Katrina and Lucy, began schooling in 2016, focusing in accounting and business. Martha also contributes to the school fees of their two brothers, Donald and Lord, who began at the Polytechnic in 2014. Martha says, “It makes me happy to help support my sister’s children. Since she passed away two years ago, I help their father with their fees. Next, I want to help support the two remaining children who want to go to nursing school. I hope also to build a house for them someday.”

**AGNES COLE ARTHUR**, a Global Mamas batiker, was able to send her only daughter, Felicia, to university in September 2016. Aggie states, “I feel very proud. My daughter is studying Corporate Administration and Management. I hope this is the beginning of a bright future for her.” With her own children in college, Aggie has now taken in one of her sister’s children, Theophilus, who is four years old. Aggie enrolled Theo in his first year of school and is looking forward to seeing him graduate college one day.

**VIDA DONKOH**, Cape Coast seamstress, built an addition onto her newly-finished home in order to set up her workshop with her two employees. Vida also purchased an industrial sewing machine and a surging machine (or “knitting machine”, as they say in Ghana). She states, “Having this workshop and these new machines means that I can do more work. I hope to earn more money from this and have a bigger shop.” Additionally in 2016, Vida’s youngest daughter, Blessing, began primary school. She now has three children in school and dreams of them graduating from college one day.

**PHILOMENA STEPHENS** is a hardworking seamstress and a loving mother of four. In 2016, she was able to send her third child, Yameye, to primary school. Yameye is following in the footsteps of her older siblings Sompa (16) and Success (13). Philomena says: “I hope for all of my children to get more education, and I will push them to attend university, too.” Two-year-old Blessing will be the next to embark on his school journey in a few years’ time. As well as being a busy mother, Philomena has been able to improve upon her own thriving sewing business, which she’s been running for the last five years. This past year, Philo was able to buy an industrial sewing machine, which means she and her team of four will be able to increase their productivity and income in 2017.

**JULIANA MUSTAPHA** moved from Cape Coast to join her husband in Kasoa in 2016. At that time, she asked her two trusted employees to come with her. In order to make this possible, Juliana provided them with accommodations. Juliana explains: “My husband and I had some land in Kasoa. I was able to contribute funds for building our home and my workshop. We were also able to build a room and a porch for my workers, in order for them to carry on working with me.” She continues, “I’ve had clients who didn’t pay on time, or who have never paid at all. Working with Global Mamas and receiving payments on time really helps with saving. I’ve also made connections through them, to get my own clients in the US and the UK, which helped to expand my business.” Juliana and her husband have even started building another apartment on their land. She hopes that she will be able to complete it soon and rent it out for additional income.

**Yadah Donkoh is proud to be able to send all three of her children to school**
The Global Mamas community works together to create a life of prosperity for African women and their families by creating and selling handmade products of the highest quality.

100% of Global Mamas producers receive ON-THE-JOB TRAINING

EDUCATION equals SUCCESS

100% of the Mamas children are attending school (that’s 237 kids!)

100% of Global Mamas fully invests in benefits including SOCIAL SECURITY and access to NATIONAL HEALTH CARE INSURANCE for 100% of our 68 employees.

100% of Global Mamas producers receive ON-THE-JOB TRAINING

100% of Global Mamas producers make 3X MINIMUM WAGE

Pretty amazing given that 85% of the Mamas have not studied beyond high school.

100% of Global Mamas producers receive ON-THE-JOB TRAINING

Global Mamas has 9 LOCATIONS

195 PRODUCTS

(60% use recycled content or repurposed scraps)

21 VOLUNTEERS in 2016

Global Mamas products are sold in 24 COUNTRIES

65% IN NORTH AMERICA

6% IN EUROPE

26% IN AFRICA

4% IN AUSTRALIA


3The Labour Market in Ghana, p. 35. SASK, December 2009.

Compare our stats with national data from GHANA

52% of the population lives on less than $2 a day.¹

8% of craft industry workers have access to social security.²

34% of craft industry workers work more than 50 hours a week.²

EDUCATION equals SUCCESS

Goal setting & support

fair trade

business management

computer skills

technical skills

health

personal finance

basic skills

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EXPLORING EMPOWERMENT

Insights from Volunteer Emily Beaudoin

Since 2003, Global Mamas has worked to create prosperity in Africa by empowering their staff and producers. As a student of Gender Studies and International Development Studies, I spent my summer in Ghana investigating what it means to be “empowered” at Global Mamas. Seen as a sort of silver bullet toward a better tomorrow, empowering women has become a buzzword in international development. Global Mamas was interested in moving away from this broad-based understanding of empowerment and moving towards what empowerment means to the women (and men!) who work with the organization.

During June and July 2016, I conducted 35 interviews with the Mamas and staff members, primarily at the Cape Coast office. My findings suggest that empowerment at Global Mamas is comprised of four components: skills, an enhanced knowledge set, a sense of achievement, and the agency to speak one’s mind.

Given the emphasis Global Mamas places on skills training sessions, it is no surprise that many of the respondents spoke highly of the skills they have gained working at Global Mamas. The Mamas reported being better able to produce “quality” goods, having sharpened creativity, and having the knowledge to produce new and innovative sewing and batik designs.

“I have learned quality...how to do your best, and how to not disappoint. So, I have learned so many things,” said one of the Mamas.

For producers and staff, the ready access to educational workshops is part of what makes working for Global Mamas so empowering—and exciting. Mamas and staff members alike expressed an appreciation for learning about global fashion trends and about the cultures of foreign volunteers and interns, like myself. One of the Quality Control Champions told me, “I engage in conversations with the interns so I have the chance to know more about the people from outside of Ghana. And, you know, different cultures and how they are...I love working here. I learn more here, I get a chance to meet new people, know more things about them, a different side of life.”

Other interviewees mentioned health workshops where they learned about diabetes and certain types of cancer. Thus, Mamas are empowered not only with knowledge that will benefit their business, but also with knowledge that will more holistically benefit their lives.

Further, and significantly, Mamas are proud of what they have accomplished at Global Mamas, and this feeling of accomplishment was reflected in many of the interviews I conducted.

“I felt very proud because I feel like I am working and receive my money so I can do something, help my children, they are in school. My husband is helping, but me too! So, I feel proud about it. And, I am always happy about it since I joined Global Mamas,” said one Mama.

Numerous respondents explicitly mentioned feeling pride in using their money to send their children or siblings to school. Other sources of pride include producing “First Class, First Time” work, purchasing their own equipment, and winning awards such Global Mama of the Year.

Finally, producers and staff members at Global Mamas are not afraid to be vocal. Especially in the office during meetings, the Mamas and staff voice their opinions when something needs to be said. One of the seamstresses stated, “Oh, I always speak my mind. When there is something going wrong that I don’t like I just solve it. I am open. I tell them what I feel I should tell them.”

Other women reported feeling comfortable having one-on-one meetings with staff members to address issues that come up. Most of the time, these issues are solved to the best of Global Mamas’ ability, a testament to the fact that not only are the women vocal, but also that their voices and messages are well received.

Empowerment at Global Mamas is multifaceted and complex. Empowered women (and men!) have an enhanced skillset and knowledge set, a sense of achievement, and the agency to speak their mind. Of course, this is not to say there is not more to understand about empowerment at Global Mamas. In fact, it would be interesting to examine how, in terms of empowerment, producers at Global Mamas differ from small business owners in elsewhere in Ghana.

I would like to thank Global Mamas for allowing me to spend my summer interviewing the wonderful producers and staff who work there, at all levels of the organization. I would also like to thank the Kellogg Institute for International Studies at the University of Notre Dame for funding my project.
"Because of my earnings from Global Mamas I was able to buy land and ten boxes of cement to build my own shop." Rebecca Willison, seamstress.

"The health programs have changed my life." Belinda Siatey, Krobo

"We couldn't do it without you!

YOUR SUPPORT IS INVALUABLE

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The Accessories Shop
The Artisan Gallery
The Bridge
The Eccletic Company
The Green Phoenix
The Green Store
The House of Fair Trade, Sweden
The Mod Cabin
Trade Roots
Traditions Fair Trade Cafe
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Ujamia Collective
Unique World Gifts
UU Fellowship of Vero Beach
Villages of Africa
Wanderlust
Waterfront Trading Co
WC Trading Co.
Weltladen El Mundo
Weltladen Würzburg
Whitey Plantation
Wild Child Madison
World Cup Market
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World Wide Gifts
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Yagga Shea Butter
Zee Bee Market
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OUR MISSION
The Global Mamas community works together to create a life of prosperity—financial well-being, happiness, and health—for African women and their families. We achieve prosperity by creating and selling handmade products of the highest quality.

OUR VALUES
- We believe in the strength of community.
- We have a long-term commitment to each other and to the organization.
- We are innovators dedicated to quality, creativity, and continuous improvement.
- We are committed to achieving economic self-sufficiency, as individuals and as an organization.
- We are part of a global community that creates positive change through the work we do.

HOW YOU CAN GET INVOLVED

Donate – Be a part of funding the sustainable growth of businesses and women’s empowerment in Ghana with a tax-deductible donation. www.globalmamas.org/Info/Donate

Purchase Products – By purchasing Global Mamas products, you are offering women in Ghana the opportunity to achieve prosperity. All proceeds go directly to the women and nonprofit programs that assist them with business development. www.shopglobalmamas.com

Volunteer in Ghana – Volunteers work with the women of the Global Mamas community to support them in realizing their dreams. Through a short-term volunteer assignment, you will be able to use your skills to make a difference in the future of the women and their families. www.globalmamas.org/Volunteers

Host a Prosperity Party – You can host a Global Mamas pop-up shop in a place of your choice. Earn 10% of sales for your favorite cause or as a Global Mamas gift card. www.globalmamas.org/info/prosperityparty

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