Annual Report 2013 A Decade of Prosperity XD amas

Including a look back at the last decade with the founding Mamas!



A Decade in Perspective: A Note From Our Founders

At our volunteer house in Cape Coast, Ghana, we still have the dilapidated suitcase that held our first shipment of sundresses and bags produced by Cape Coast batikers and seamstresses in 2003. It's a reminder of how far we've come and all the dreams that have been achieved since we put that suitcase of products on a plane from Accra to Minneapolis.

As we look back on the decade that has passed, we are utterly humbled by the strides we've made together. From the six founding Mamas (Alice, Elizabeth, Emma, Esther, Hannah, and Florence—see where they are now on page six) we've grown to providing economic opportunities to nearly six hundred women at nine locations. From just one employee, Patience (read her story on page nine) we've grown to 55. And, thanks to our loyal retail partners, we've gone from distribution in Ghana and the U.S. to a global presence in more than twenty-four countries.

But some things haven't changed. We've always been focused on providing steady work and opportunities for women so they can obtain the education, technology, and capital they need to meet personal and professional goals. We hear from Mamas time and time again that they appreciate our ability to pay them promptly—often a challenge for many employers in Ghana, and indeed a challenge faced by Mamas who own their own businesses. Paying on time is just one piece of our commitment to fair wages. Because we take fair wages so seriously, we engaged a volunteer team in summer 2013 to ensure we're paying a fair wage to producers and employees at all of our sites in Ghana. Find out how volunteers Sarah and Jessica tackled this challenge on page 10.

• Acceptance into the Fair Trade

• Develop our signature African

Spirit Good Luck Charm.

Since 2003, we've been focused on reinvesting our revenue in the Mamas. In fact, since inception, more than 30 percent of revenue has been paid directly to the Mamas in wages. Artisans (and employees too!) have done some pretty incredible things with these wages. From batiker Aggie Cole Arthur, who put herself through college, to Wisdom, our Cape Coast general manager, who rose through the ranks from quality control employee to production manager before running our entire Cape Coast site, everyone has experienced tremendous growth in the past ten years.

At our heart, Global Mamas exists to provide prosperity to women in Ghana. But what does prosperity really mean? We believe it goes beyond economic well-being: it also encompasses happiness and health for all who work with Global Mamas. We have come a long way in our first decade and we are excited to continue our progress into the next decade. Our impact so far is detailed in the following pages. Looking into the future, the Mamas are focused on sustaining their prosperity and extending opportunities to new Mamas. Please take a moment to read our plan on page 12, for an eco-concious production facility that will employ 200 women. This will be a huge task, but we are ready to leverage our strength to achieve our goals.

Here's to another decade of prosperity!

Renae Adam Co-Founder

Kristin Johnson Co-Founder

2003

• Global Mamas begins with six founding Mamas.

2004



• Patience Essibu. our first employee, is hired to provide

2005

Federation.

bookkeeping training to help Mamas better manage their growing businesses.

Eli-Emma Batik is the first workshop built with income from Global Mamas.

2006

- Launch our bead location in Odumase Krobo with a grant from the British High Commission.
- Partner with Design For Life and work with British designers to create the Retro Dress.

2007

 Acceptance into the World Fair Trade Organization.

• Design the first Urban Explorer Bag, ensuring scrap fabric could be utilized instead of burned.



2009

• Introduce the Global Mamas wholesale website.

• Cape Coast batiker, Louisa Esi Dadzi, is the first apprentice of a Mama to open her own business.-

2010

• Open the Global Mamas Fair Trade Store in Accra.

2008



- sales.
- Open Fair Trade Textile Workshop, our batiking and sewing center directly employing Mamas in Pram Pram.
- Dreams of the Fair Trade Zone begin.
- First child of a Mama to graduate from college with tuition paid from Global Mamas income.



2011

• Cape Coast batiker, Aggie Cole-Arthur sends herself to college using Global Mamas income. • Reach \$1 million in annual

2012

2013

• Initiated strategic planning process for the next decade of prosperity.

• Developed architectural plans to build the Fair Trade Zone (read more on page 12).

• Supported by a grant from the Embassy of France, move Fair Trade Textile workshop from Pram Pram to Ashaiman to provide economic opportunity to larger population.









¹Poverty headcount ratio at \$2 a day (% per population)[Online] Available from://data.worldbank.org/indicator/SI.POV.2DAY. World Bank, 2014. ²The Labour Market in Ghana, p. 39. SASK, December 2009. ³Ghana Living Standards Survey, p.29. September 2008. ⁴The Labour Market in Ghana, p. 24, SASK, December 2009. The original study was done in 2008. Average ¹Poverty headcount ratio at \$2 a day (% per population)[Online] Available from://data.worldbank.org/indicator/SI.POV.2DAY. World Bank, 2014.²The Labour Market in Ghana, p. 39. GNI growth rate per year (7%) was used to estimate the increase in average wages between 2008 and June, 2013. ⁵The Labour Market in Ghana, p. 35. SASK, December 2009.

A Decade of Prosperity: Founding Mamas Look Back



Founding Mamas: Hannah, Florence, Emma, Alice, and Esther.

In honor of our decade of prosperity, we gathered the founding Mamas to reminisce on how far we've come since they started the organization with cofounders Kristin and Renae in 2003. Alice. Esther. Emma, Florence, and Hannah came from around Cape Coast to share their memories. Keeping with the Ghanaian tradition of starting meetings with a prayer, they united their voices to give thanks before they began the discussion. Though one Mama, Eli, was not able to attend, we hope you feel the collective passion of the Mamas as you read their story in their own words.

Think back to 2003. What do you remember most about founding Global Mamas?

Esther: One day, Kristin and Renae came to my sewing shop and told me about Women in Progress, an organization they were founding to help women in Ghana. They asked me, if I had the opportunity to work with the organization, would I do it? And I said, "Wow! Yes, of course." Life wasn't easy back then. [Esther laughs, remembering.] It was difficult. So, they asked me to sew a dress. They didn't have a pattern then, but I gave it my best effort.

Emma: I started as the only batiker at Women in Progress. I knew Renae and Efua [the Mamas call Kristin Efua, the Ghanaian name for people born on Friday] from when they were here as Peace Corps volunteers [in the early 1990s] and they wanted to help girls who had dropped out of school. They founded a women's center and I became a batiking teacher there.

Hannah: Yes. Efua also wanted to help the women financially so they were not always dependent on their husbands. She formed the Progressive Women's Credit Union [also part of the women's center]. When she was finally leaving for the U.S., I called her and said, "Efua, why don't you take some of our samples to find a market for them in America?" And she went home and started what we called a "suitcase business."

Florence: After selling those first products, Efua came back to help us start fresh.

Emma: She had a suitcase full of fabric for us to batik!

Alice: I was a student in the second batch of batikers trained at the women's center. My teacher was [founding Mama] Auntie Emma. [All laugh.] I also learned sewing. One day I was in Bakaano [area in Cape Coast where the women's center was located] when a customer came and asked me to make a skirt in two hours. So I did, and she came again the next day. Today we are still here as an organization. [The room erupts in cheers].

What's the story behind the name Global Mamas?

Hannah: We started as Women in Progress. Then things started booming and people around the world were buying our products, so it became a global affair. We are all mothers, so we changed the name to Global Mamas because every family has a mama.

As you look back, what's your favorite memory?

Emma: Mine is when Kristin and Renae brought a suitcase with twenty shirts for me to batik. I was so happy to have so much work! Yes! I could help my husband with school fees and other expenses. Continued on page 8>>>



Continued from page 6>>>

Hannah: One time there was a 500 shirt order and everyone, all the volunteers, came to my shop. They all worked. In fact, we didn't sleep. Everyone was rushing in to help out. It was a family affair. Oh, the volunteers! They don't just come here to sightsee. They come to work, to discuss business plans, and to share ideas and visions. They are very inspiring. So we thank them for their impact and knowledge.

Esther: When we started we had no patterns, we had to create our own. I remember the Gypsy Skirt. I told Renae, "I can't, I'm not a magician!" but she said, "Yes, you can." It took me about four days and I did it.

What is your most exciting personal accomplishment since starting Global Mamas?

Emma: Global Mamas has helped me a lot. My husband and I had no money to finish building our house. So I started working with Global Mamas, and thanks to the money I earned we were able to build our house and my workshop. It also helped me to pay my children's school fees. [Note: Although Ghanaian public schools are free at the primary level, secondary schools operate on a fee basis. Additionally, many families choose to send their children to private schools in hopes of higher quality education.]

Florence: I am very proud to be a Global Mama. I am proud because it has helped meet my family's needs. Because of Global Mamas, we are all trained ladies with money and now we want to help others.

Hannah: Yes, it has helped our families and beyond. It has put smiles on so many faces. In fact, because of Global Mamas, I have been able to train some apprentices for free. I remember one girl who lost her mother and father. She came to me and said "I want to work with you," and I could help her. I think my working with Global Mamas made a great impact on this girl's life.

Alice: Everything they say is true. My first apprentice once said, "So long as I can work and make money, no man will misuse me." I was very proud of her. We are ready to teach girls who are ready to learn.

Esther: When I finished vocational school, I started with a borrowed sewing machine. Because of Global Mamas I have been able to buy my own machines.

Since my childhood, I have had the feeling of wanting to help people, and now I feel I am helping people, because I can buy machines for other seamstresses in need.

Hannah: If you look at Global Mamas now, there are a lot of people who have been helped.

Is anyone thinking of retirement, or are you as young as you were 10 years ago?

Hannah: Just look at me. [She struts around the room.] People think I am 40, look at me! I am still young because of Global Mamas.

Alice: When you look at all the work, we are very busy and it keeps us very active.

What does prosperity mean to you?

Esther: The definition of prosperity is what you want. I understand what it means; it means something different for each of us.

Emma: As human beings, our purpose in this world is to prosper and achieve. I have set my goals. It is very hard, but I know I will achieve them.

Hannah: I think everyone who works with Global Mamas would say they have prospered. Global Mamas made a family; it united women. Global Mamas will stand high and tall every day. Ask each of us, without Global Mamas where would you be now?

Have we ever asked you to make a strange or surprising product?

Hannah: [Laughing.] Yes, I was asked to make a dog's dress. [Others laugh and wonder how a dog was going to wear a dress.]

What is your dream for Global Mamas in the next 10 years?

Alice: In the next 10 years, Global Mamas will grow at every level.

Hannah: I am praying that Global Mamas keeps growing. I wish Global Mamas all the best. We are going to have a lot of Mamas in and around Cape Coast, and even all around the world.

Patience Essibu: Our First Employee Shares Her Story



Patience with her eldest daughter Phillipa.

For our first employee, Patience Essibu, it is hard is extremely organized." His coworker Christiane to believe that she has been creating prosperity in agrees, noting that Patience encourages the staff Ghana for a decade. As Global Mamas has grown, "like a mother" and that her name reflects her Patience has grown with it. She remembers that on her first day of work, "the computer was in front of patience she has, that is why she is called of me and I thought 'what do I do !?' After I studied Patience! You always see her laughing, smiling, and the spreadsheets and understood expectations, I most importantly caring." gained the insight, the technical know-how." Even then, Patience enjoyed keeping financial records "It's because of the passion and the and making sure that the Mamas were learning this mission of Global Mamas that I stay." valuable skill—important work that Patience still does today.

Though working for a small start-up nonprofit had its challenges, Patience recalls that from the beginning Global Mamas was a "real family." She fondly remembers holding meetings with cofounder Renae over Fan Ice, the popular Ghanaian ice cream. She also remembers processing just a few orders in 2003 and sending them to the U.S. in a single suitcase. She is still amazed that monthly orders fill an entire van. She beams as she shares all that seamstresses and batikers have learned about quality over the years, saying: "As we grew we learned from our mistakes and brought changes." With a degree in management studies from the University of Cape Coast, Patience believes that product innovation has been the key to success: "Every organization, if you want to stay relevant, you need to innovate and provide new products to your customers." Global Mamas has grown to work with 67 Mama business owners in Cape Coast and more than 500 women across Ghana, expanding beyond batiked apparel and home décor to include recycled glass beaded jewelry and ornaments, as well as shea butter skin care products.

Over the years, Patience has earned promotions and taken on new challenges. Among other responsibilities, she manages eight quality control staff members, which she says is difficult but always interesting. For their part, the staff is fond of her for her poise and kindness. In the words of quality control staff member Hubert, "She always wants to know you have done the right thing and she is extremely organized." His coworker Christiane agrees, noting that Patience encourages the staff "like a mother" and that her name reflects her approach to work: "Words can't explain the amount of patience she has, that is why she is called Patience! You always see her laughing, smiling, and most importantly caring."

- Patience Essibu

Amid all this praise, Patience remains humble. When complimented on her professional accomplishments, she just says, "The glory goes to God." And she makes it clear that she's excited about another decade of prosperity with Global Mamas, saying, "It's because of the passion and the mission of Global Mamas that I stay. I see that we are helping African women to help their families by giving them regular orders for sewing and batiking work. I believe prosperity has been achieved. So I think being part of this mission is a great thing to do."

9

Volunteer Highlight: Living Wage Project



Sara and Jessica at Wli Falls

Adventures Across Ghana

From the colorful and bustling streets of the city, to the taste of sizzling fried plantains on the beach and the vibrant sound of music and chatter in the local market, life as a volunteer in Ghana is always an adventure. Every city is unique and every Mama has her own story to tell. Summer 2013 volunteers Jessica Fox and Sara Klein got to experience this rich diversity, traveling across the country and immersing themselves in many aspects of Ghanaian life. They tiptoed across rope bridges 130 feet up in the air at the Kakum National Park and explored the Togo mountain range in Ho. They met people from all different walks of life, exchanging stories and forging new memories.

In addition to the plethora of cultural, linguistic, and experiential diversity they saw across Ghana, they also saw firsthand some drastic economic

differences. While a refreshing drink with the Mamas in the bead making village of Krobo may cost you only some spare change, along the beach in Accra the price rivals that of a U.S. city. Quantifying these differences in the cost of living is an enormous task and one that Global Mamas has been pursuing for quite some time. Jessica and Sara helped us tackle this question as we strive to ensure that all Mamas in all locations receive a living wage.

Defining a Living Wage

While our entry level wages have always been between 20-30 percent higher than Ghana's minimum wage and Mamas' salaries are adjusted annually for inflation and individual performance, it is important that our employees receive a fair and living wage within their communities. This living wage should cover and surpass all basic needs such as food, rent, utilities, education, clean drinking water, clothing, transportation, medical expenses, and savings. To calculate the cost of living for our Mamas, Sara and Jessica used a data set created by past volunteers, including Angela Jo and Paivi Pöyhönen. This data was based on 66 employee interviews across four production locations and five in-depth interviews with third party organizations, including the Ghana Internal Revenue Service and the Ghana Trade Union Congress. Sara and Jessica's were tasked with analyzing and benchmarking this data with other academic studies to create the





most accurate picture of the costs faced by our Mamas.

Sara, a student at the University of South Carolina, focused her work on comparisons of textile workers' wages around the world and the selection of important benchmarking tools. Jessica, a student at Franklin University Switzerland who now works for Global Mamas in the U.S. office, focused her



time on data analysis and the creation of a formula for salary multipliers. These salary multipliers help to ensure that Mamas facing different costs of living because of their location are similarly compensated for their work. A Mama in Cape Coast with the same skill sets as a Mama in Ashaiman may need a higher wage since her cost of living is higher.



With this in mind, Sara and Jessica worked with co-founder Renae Adam to make immediate and direct changes to Mamas' salaries, increasing salaries by an average of 12 percent. We can now say with confidence that we offer living wages to our Mamas. This was a highlight for Sara who says, "my favorite part about being in Ghana was getting to not only learn about the culture and how things are run but also being able to see firsthand the opportunity and difference Global Mamas makes for its employees."

Prospering for Another Decade: The Fair Trade Zone



Initial plans for the sewing rooms at the Fair Trade Zone.

What is the Fair Trade Zone?

In 2013, Global Mamas reached a monumental \$1,150,925 in sales. We were delighted and challenged in equal measure as we realized that we were facing the rare issue that demand had outstripped production. To address this problem, Global Mamas initiated plans in 2012 for a new production facility called the Fair Trade Zone (FTZ) with the potential to increase current production output by 54 percent. The vision for the FTZ is to help revive the Ghanaian textile industry by employing 200 women full-time in a comfortable production center that cultivates learning, healthy living, and teamwork, all with the aim of creating prosperity.

2013: A Year of Development

2013 was a year of development and preparation as our vision for the FTZ began coming to life. An

international team of architecture students was led by Architecture Sans Frontières (Architecture Without Borders) United Kingdom to implement their participatory design process focused on making international development issues integral to architecture. Volunteers Adjoa Akowuah, Emily Wright, Kofi Ofosu-Ennin, and Lisanne De Beun traveled with their team leader, Sophie Morley, between our Ashaiman and Cape Coast sites observing the workspaces, soliciting feedback from seamstresses and batikers, and researching materials that could be used to build the ecoconscious production center. As Sophie notes, "ASF-UK is collaborating with Global Mamas to rethink spaces of production in the textiles industry. Through a participatory design process, ASF worked with the Mamas to understand the process and spatial needs for the center, with the aim to empower the Mamas to take a leading role in the creation of their new work environment."



Volunteers visiting another sustainable building project.

Innovative, Participatory, and Sustainable Design

Soon, simple cardboard cutouts and ink sketches \$150,000. We've developed a fundraising plan began to resemble the reality we hope the Fair called Building Prosperity that includes financing Trade Zone will become. Batikers and seamstresses from private foundations, service organizations, alike shared specific concerns and requirements government agencies, and individual donors. There for their working environment. Changing rooms are challenges beyond fundraising, though: Global will be added to the batik area and workspace will Mamas must face the constraints of buying land be flexible so that batikers can decide on a useful and building in Ghana. We are beginning to view setup. For their part, the seamstresses shared potential sites in the Ashaiman/Tema area to make that some prefer a communal workspace, while the commute easy for employees at our current others prefer a more personal space. In response, Ashaiman location. the architects created a variety of spaces to Though the ASF-UK team was only here for nine accomodate this request. Because consideration for productive weeks, the completion of our Fair Trade the environment and sustainable development are important to Global Mamas, the architects included Zone is a long-term project upon which we continue to collaborate with ASF-UK. We look forward to a design for biogas toilets. With this addition, methane gas from the toilet waste is captured in further developing plans and making progress a sealed tank and then used to heat the wax and throughout 2014 and beyond to achieve this shared water required by the batiking process. Currently, dream. coals are used to heat wax and water, so these improvements mean Global Mamas will need Sophie and volunteers working through the floor plan. to purchase less coal; methane also burns more cleanly than coal.

After nine weeks, the ASF-UK team was ready to present all their hard work in a final conceptual design. Finally, the foundations behind the Fair Trade Zone seemed a reality. With a space specifically made for a childcare center, the center fosters a comfortable working environment for mothers. Recycled and repurposed waste and local materials serve as the foundations for the nearly self-sufficient site. According to Sophie, "The concept design reflected these aspirations of all involved and ASF-UK will continue to partner with

Global Mamas to help them realize the center as part of their strategic long term plans."

What's Next?

Though Global Mamas now has the conceptual design for the FTZ, there is still much to do before lifting it from paper into reality. Now, we're focused on creating a detailed budget for all elements of the design. The architect team estimates the cost of land and the construction of the production facility will cost around \$500,000.

To achieve this sizeable goal, the ASF-UK team worked to scale down the production facility into a modular building that can have additions added as funds are raised. For example, purchasing the land and beginning phase one, in which we'll construct a smaller production facility, will cost



Contributions

A special thank you to the many people who contributed time, money, and passion to improving and expanding the Global Mamas community in 2013.

Bonnie Chappell

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"Global Mamas is helping me in more ways than I could have imagined. They have taught me skills like bookkeeping and making quality goods, which are helping me advance my reputation and thus my business." - Martina Obena

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A special thanks to our 2013 Annual Report contributors: Paige Affinito, Jaclyn Beidronski, Amelia Brandt, Jessica Fox, Emma Shearman, Ericka Wallis.



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Thanks to the efforts of these wonderful retail partners who sell at least \$1,000 of our products, the Mamas' work reaches the hands of individuals around the world.

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Ashaiman based batiker, Lydia, focuses intently on lining up the stamp for a popular batik design, Marrakech.





Florence Thannie proudly showing the Weekend Bag she sews with her staff

Maya

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"One of my biggest dreams when I joined Global Mamas was to send my children to University. By the grace of God, it's like a dream has come true. My daughter is at University. I'm happy!" - Juliana Mustapha

	Tenfold Fair Trade Collection
national	Tesoros Trading Company
р	The Artisan Gallery
al	The Bridge
ds	The Eclectic Company
orks	The Green Phoenix, LLC
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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 Fund the sustainable growth of businesses and women's empowerment in Ghana with a taxdeductible donation. Learn more about making a donation online at **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. Shop online today at **www.shopglobalmamas.com**

Volunteer in Ghana Volunteers work directly with the women of the Global Mamas community to expand their businesses. Through a short-term volunteer assignment, you will be able to use your skills to help others and make a difference in the future of the women and their families in Ghana. Learn more online at www.globalmamas.org/Volunteers

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