



# Global Mamas

## Annual Report 2017

Global  
Mamas



# TO OUR SUPPORTERS,

2017 was a year of dreaming big and looking forward. As we prepare to celebrate 15 years of exceptional impact in 2018, we are motivated to think about new ways we can continue to impact our communities. Our partnership on European expansion has continued to go well and we have our eyes set on other regions where Global Mamas has yet to make a presence. We've made some exciting strides in the sourcing arena - don't miss the article on pg. 9 about our [TRANSITION TO ORGANIC FABRIC](#). And we are especially excited to report that we were very successful with achieving our strategic goals for the year...well, most of them. Keep reading to see which one gave us the most trouble.

Our primary strategic goal was to return our annual sales to \$1 Million. We reached [\\$1,058,683](#) in sales - a [17%](#) increase! [31%](#) was paid to Mamas in wages, which meant an increase of [\\$44,868](#) over the prior year. We also reached our First Class First Time goal, On-Time Production goal, and our new Solution Focused goal that recognized problem solvers from each location. This shift in encouraging problem solving has helped our organizational culture to become more proactive.

That's not to say the last year was without challenges. The transition to organic fabric was not easy. We thought it would be a stress-free transition since the fabric was still cotton. Yet, while we haven't figured out the science of it, the organic fabric really likes to hold onto the wax used in batik production, which challenged us to come up with some new production techniques...not before ruining some of our precious, new fabric. Our fifth strategic goal was for each of our offices to set a Location goal that would stretch each team. While some locations had great success with their goals, we did end the year with one lingering challenge. Our Odumase-Krobo office was challenged with acquiring land for our Fair Trade Zone site. We made exciting progress, only to end up finding that the land we were looking at was not legally available. This option looked so promising and we are all disappointed that it fell through.

Though the year had some bumps in the road, we all enjoyed the opportunities we had to [DREAM ABOUT THE FUTURE](#). In addition to the many SMART goals focused on supporting their children's educations, many Mamas also set and achieved SMART goals that secured their own futures (like buying land) and improved their businesses (like renovating their stores or buying new equipment). Pictured below, Gloria Amanful and Sarah Adjei both set and achieved the goal of becoming land owners, they even share a border.

Throughout 2017 our Leadership Team also invested considerable time developing a new strategic plan that will keep us focused on achieving our most important goals over the next three years. Our Leadership Team was comprised of



Gloria Amanful and Sarah Adjei celebrate becoming landowners on their shared border.

managers of locations from across Ghana and North America. We are incredibly grateful once again to have the wisdom and leadership of Robin Ross guiding our process.

“At Global Mamas I'm doing things which I never thought I could do...People have a hidden treasure and through support it will come out.”

-Gladys Adimer  
Odumase Krobo Location Manager -  
Member of the Leadership Team  
Global Mama since 2006

“Working with GM you become perfect in what you are doing because of First Class First Time. We feel proud of the work that we do.”

-Florence Worwornyo, Seamstress  
Global Mama since 2004

As part of the strategic planning process we reflected on our [UNIQUE TALENTS](#) that we will leverage to reach our goals. This was not an easy exercise! Our facilitator challenged us to narrow down to our number one unique talent, but we just couldn't do it. Instead we are proud to share our four unique talents: we are committed to long-term relationships; every decision we make considers what is best for the Mamas; we are transparent in our business practices; and we have a fully-integrated supply chain.

The Leadership Team also took on the daunting task of narrowing down a 10-page strategic plan to focus on the most important results we intend to achieve over the next three years. We agreed on the following goals:

- I. [CREATE & MEASURE OUR EXCEPTIONAL IMPACT](#) - Every Mama is on a clear path to achieving measureable prosperity.
- II. [BUILD A THRIVING COMMUNITY](#) - Our thriving community attracts and retains employees with passion for the mission and the talent to thrive in their roles. The vision and dedication of our leaders ensures our long-term sustainability. Our culture continues to evolve to be proactive, strategic, and calm.
- III. [ACHIEVE FINANCIAL WELL-BEING](#) - Global Mamas is on a clear path to achieving financial stability.
- IV. [ACHIEVE OPERATIONAL EFFICIENCY & INNOVATION](#) - Production systems ensure we are producing the highest quality products while meeting customer demand through steady and streamlined production.

It is very important to the members of the Leadership Team that everyone at Global Mamas feels connected to our strategic goals in a meaningful way. So each year we create the Global Mamas Dashboard that keeps our most important strategic goals top of mind by tying the achievement of these goals to a significant cash bonus. With monthly reporting and discussions, the Leadership Team ensures that every person working at Global Mamas sees how she/he can influence the outcome. Our 2018 Dashboard goals focus on sales growth, debt reduction, First Class First Time quality in production, and leveling out our production cycles to ensure that products arrive on time to our stores in Ghana and our distribution hubs in North America, Europe, and Australia. In addition, each location highlights innovators and problem solvers each month to strengthen our culture of continuous improvement. We look forward to celebrating our progress with you in 2018.

Thanks for your continued support,  
  
*The Global Mamas  
Leadership Team*



Patience Treve and Robin Ross organizing ideas from the Leadership Team.



# GLOBAL MAMA OF THE YEAR CELEBRATION 2017



At left: Each year Global Mamas recognizes one outstanding craftswoman as the Global Mama of the Year. The annual celebration is a highlight of the year as it brings together representatives from our centers in Accra, Ashaiman, Cape Coast, and Odumase-Krobo. This year we also welcomed staff and volunteers from North America and Europe. It is wonderful to get together in person to celebrate each other and our achievements from the past year.

At right: The 2017 Global Mama of the Year was Vida Donkoh, a seamstress in Cape Coast specializing in the production of women's blouses. Vida was recognized for her dedication and hard work, delivering her orders on time with first class quality, and most importantly for employing and mentoring three young women – mentoring is deeply valued organization wide.

*Pictured (left to right): Co-Founder Renae Adam; People Development Director and Cape Coast General Manager Patience Treve; Quality Control Champion Esther Aggrey-Fynn; Global Mama of the Year Vida Donkoh; Co-Founders Emma Myers, Kristin Johnson, and Elizabeth Ampiah. Emma and Elizabeth, the power duo also known as Eli-Emma, were the first Mamas to earn the distinction of Mamas of the Year.*



At left: In 2017 we honored all past Global Mama of the Year winners to recognize their hard work in developing Global Mamas. We surprised the past winners with a cash reward in memory of our beloved co-worker, Melanie Popowich. May she rest in peace.

*Pictured (left to right): Juliana Mustapha (batiker); Israel, husband of Lizzy Kumah (beadmaker); Victoria Tettey (bead assembler); Hannah Dodoo (Seamstress); Gladys Adimer (Krobo General Manager); Esther Gyepi Garbrah (seamstress); Charity Okine (seamstress); Martha Rhule (batiker); Faustina Tetteh (batiker); Moses Buernortey (beadmaker); Grace Doku (beadmaker); Vida Donkoh (seamstress); Emma Myers (batiker); Elizabeth Ampiah (batiker).*

“The people I work with make me feel happy. All the time I find something to laugh about.”

–Grace Osabutey, Batiker.  
A Global Mama since 2012



Above: Global Mamas staff members are also honored at the celebration. In 2017 Financial Manager Benedicta Arthur (left) was recognized by her co-workers for her transparency. Benedicta is the master at tracking every last Cedi (Ghana's currency, pronounced see-dee) spent by Global Mamas. The award was presented by her co-worker Amos Kporshiebu, Production Manager of our Ashaiman location.

“We are all doing important work at Global Mamas that will help each other achieve a better future.”

–Christiane Ahouassou  
Quality Manager  
A Global Mama since 2007



Above: Global Mamas events are always family affairs. Inventory Manager Joyce Arthur brought her son Aseda. Joyce has been working with Global Mamas since 2008. In her role as Inventory Manager, Joyce ensures every order released to the Mamas includes the proper amount of fabric and materials. She also picks out the designs sold at our fair trade store in Accra.



Above: Quality Control Champions Esther Aggrey-Fynn, Elizabeth Aikins, Hubert Mensah, and Alice Moses (from left to right) enjoying the afternoon. The Cape Coast Quality Control Champions are a critical part of the team helping to ensure that the Mamas realize their First Class First Time production goals.

Below: No celebration in Ghana would be complete without singing and dancing. We were honored to have our co-workers Suzzy Korsah (left) and Priscilla Mensah (right) get us moving with traditional dances from each of our locations. Suzzy has worked with Global Mamas since 2008 and was the 2017 Employee of the Year. In 2017 Suzzy was promoted to Manager of our new fair trade store in Cape Coast.



Below: Bead Assembler Eunice Mensah (left) was honored by her manager Gladys Adimer (right) with the award for Respect, which is given to the Mama who welcomes people from different backgrounds and respects the opinions of others. Eunice has been crafting Global Mamas beaded ornaments and jewelry since 2012. She especially loves producing the variety of Global Mamas earrings.





# ACHIEVING PROSPERITY IN 2017

Global Mamas was founded

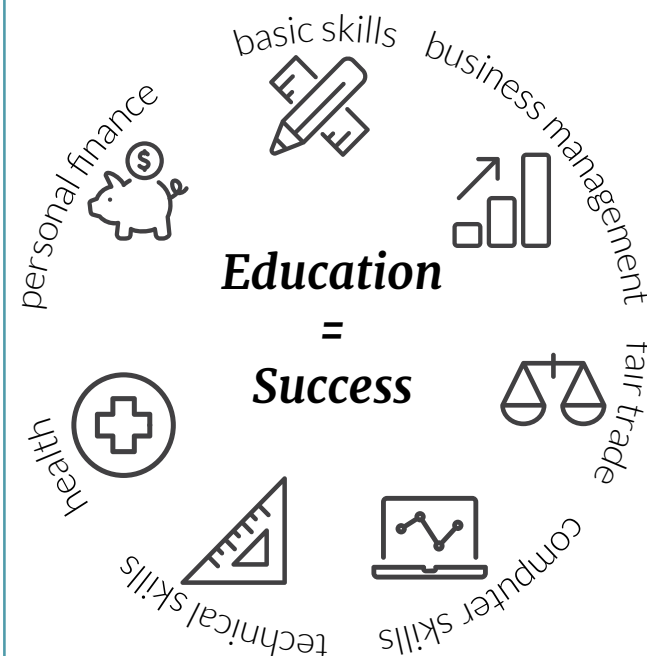
in 2003 with **6**

**WOMEN...**

Now the Global Mamas  
community is over

**353 STRONG.**

**100% of Global Mamas  
producers receive  
on-the-job training**



GLOBAL MAMAS HAS



**206**   
PRODUCTS

(60% have recycled content or  
repurposed scraps.)

 **21**  
VOLUNTEERS

in 2017

  
Global Mamas products are sold in

**24**  
COUNTRIES

64%  
IN NORTH AMERICA

6%  
IN EUROPE

26%  
IN AFRICA

4%  
IN AUSTRALIA

**86%**

of the Mamas  
ARE ABLE TO  
COVER THEIR  
FAMILY'S DAILY  
LIVING EXPENSES

**56%**

of the Mamas  
ARE ABLE TO SAVE  
FOR THE FUTURE  
AFTER COVERING  
DAILY LIVING  
EXPENSES

**89%**

of the Mamas  
FEEL COMFORTABLE  
VOICING THEIR  
CONCERNS TO  
GLOBAL MAMAS

On average  
GLOBAL MAMAS  
PRODUCERS MAKE

**3X**

MINIMUM WAGE

(Amazing, considering that 84%  
of the Mamas have not studied  
beyond high school.)

Global Mamas fully  
invests in benefits  
including

**SOCIAL SECURITY  
and access to  
NATIONAL  
HEALTH  
INSURANCE**

for 100% of our  
68 employees.

Global Mamas contributes  
**13% ABOVE  
EMPLOYEE  
SALARY TOWARDS  
RETIREMENT AND  
HEALTH INSURANCE**

**100%**  
of the  
**MAMAS' CHILDREN ARE  
ATTENDING SCHOOL**  
(that's **207** kids!)

THE MAMAS PAID SCHOOL FEES FOR AN  
ADDITIONAL **134** CHILDREN WHO  
ARE NOT THEIR OWN.

*The Mamas expressed pride in their  
personal achievements, including :*

- Investing in their kids' education
- Producing high quality items
- Supporting their families
- Repaying debt
- Training young women to sew & batik
- Creative problem solving
- Managing their growing income
- Job promotions
- Developing new technical skills
- Taking charge of their health
- Supporting extended family members
- Purchasing equipment
- Buying land and constructing homes
- Expanding their businesses
- Saving for the future



# CAPE COAST STORE

BY KRISTA ZOLTON, SUMMER INTERN

Picture this: you're on vacation in beautiful Cape Coast, Ghana, where the streets are lined with shops and laughing children. Arriving at the Global Mamas office, you meet Patience and the rest of the Cape Coast Global Mamas family. After seeing the batik fabric room and products being checked by the Quality Control staff, you want nothing more than to make a purchase to support this organization, yet the sellable products are back in Accra and your purchase will have to wait, if you even have time to make it to the Global Mamas store there.

Six weeks into my internship with Global Mamas, we moved to resolve this issue for workshop partakers and tourists alike. With a location that is steps away from the tourist area of Cape Coast, we saw an opportunity to connect with a ready market, holding untapped potential for sales. With my background in fashion merchandising, this was a perfect project for me to partner on during my internship.

I started with a sales data analysis, looking at our best-selling categories and products to determine which items to feature. With the help of the Cape Coast staff, we decided on a narrowed selection to showcase in a room once used as storage for future shipments. With creative thinking and adjustments, we found a way for the small space to make a big impact. We allotted room for top-selling items across women's, men's, kids' and babies', home decor, accessories, and skin care. This way, visitors to the office and Cape Coast would be able to conveniently find treasures to remember their trip.

Opening a Cape Coast store location was great for the company as a whole, but even more importantly it created opportunities for current and future employees to gain

“Global Mamas means a lot to me because I have gained the independence to fix things on my own.”

—Suzzy Korsah, Cape Coast Store Manager  
A Global Mama since 2008



experience in the direct-to-customer retail environment, expanding and growing their professional skills. Suzzy Korsah, a hard-working and passionate Global Mama, received a well-deserved promotion to Store Manager at the Cape Coast location stemming from her leadership on the Quality Control Team. I was able to work nearly every day with Suzzy during my time in Ghana. Even after returning home to the United States I will always remember her determination to learn, her infectious smile, and her willingness to help others. It's this “big heart” way of doing business that resonates with those coming to Ghana for the first time or returning to see more. With continued success in the store since its opening in August, this extension of the Global Mamas business is sure to bring more opportunities to the Mamas and the organization as a whole.

# ORGANIC COTTON

This year we were proud to take our collection to the next level by transitioning to fabric which is organic certified through GOTS and made by a FLO certified producer. The new fabric has a higher thread count, and silkier hand, but more importantly it dovetails perfectly with our desire to be fully invested in fair trade principles across our integrated supply chain. From individual bead to necklace, shea nut to butter, and now from cotton boll (yes, boll!) to finished garment, we not only know “who made your clothes,” but also have third-party verification recognizing that at every level the people we partner with are safe and earning a fair wage.

## WHAT TOOK SO LONG?

Knowing the indisputable environmental and social benefits of working with organic cotton, we've been searching for the right cotton supplier for years. When we started our search eight years ago, very few companies had the transparency, quality, price point, and organic status we were looking for. Others only wanted to work with much larger organizations. After searching with a focus exclusively on African suppliers but meeting various obstacles, we started looking further afield at European and USA-based mills, but still weren't finding options that met our specific criteria.



## SO WHAT CHANGED IN 2017?

In 2017, the local wax print factory supplying us with cotton yardage in Accra went out of business, a devastating loss to the country's textile industry. This escalated our search for a new fabric supplier to mission critical. In recent years, with growing social demand



for organic fabrics, more companies have invested in converting from conventional to organic practices. This time around we had better luck, finding a family run company called Silk'n Fab, based in India. They fully met our social criteria and have become an important part of our supply chain. We're delighted to be partnering with a company that values

transparency and integrity as much as we do.

## MAKING IT HAPPEN

The preparation and implementation of this transition hasn't been without its challenges—more, in fact, than initially foreseen. Though we tested how the cotton would take our dye in small batches, when batiking larger quantities of fabric problems arose, pushing back production. Becoming our own importer meant deciphering the intricacies of duty and taxes, one of the inhibitors that for years had kept us focusing on using in-country suppliers. On the financial front, we also had to make adjustments, going from financing cotton on-demand to purchasing 30,000 meters in bulk with several unexpected additional airlifts to meet demand.

In 2018, all new garments, accessories, and home decor will be produced from organic cotton, with the exception of our products made from repurposed fabric scraps (which will more slowly make the transition as we continue using up non-organic scraps). Though significant work has gone into making this change, we're proud to be able to show our environmental commitment in this way and believe it brings us into even closer alignment with our values.





RETAIL PARTNERS:

- A Ripple Effect
- Abilitee Adaptive Wear
- African Burial Ground
- Africana
- Aizada Imports
- All In One
- Amistad
- Anahata
- Aromatics International
- Bali & Soul
- Bridge of Faith African Crafts
- Buffalo Mountain Food Coop & Cafe
- Change Boutique
- Chesapeake Chocolates
- Chic Ethic Fair Trade Shop
- Connected
- Corey & Co.
- Country Woolens
- Creative Women of the World
- Divas Fair Trade
- Estrog
- Every Girl Empowered
- EZA Fairer Handel
- Fair and Square Imports
- Fair Isle Books
- Fair Trade Decor
- Fair Trade Shop Laholm
- Fair Trade Winds
- First Presbyterian Church
- Flavours of Life
- Foxglove
- Fran Kennedy
- From the Gecko Boutique
- Fusion Bath and Body Products
- Gallery 408
- Gifts With Humanity
- Giraffe
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- Heifer International
- HumanKind
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- Mekhada
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- Nomad
- Northshire Bookstore
- Nurtinger Weltladen
- Old Yak Bazaar
- On Centre
- On the Road to Hanalei
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- One World Shop
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- Pachamama Market
- Pangäa
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- Plowshare Gifts
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- Pura Vida Worldly Art
- Rabbit Rabbit Fair Trade
- Ravens Child
- Refinery
- Resurrect
- Rising Village
- Salmagundi
- San Jose International Gift Faire
- Sand Castles
- Sankofa

- Scatter Seeds
- SETEM MCM
- Seward Co-op
- Small Axe Production
- Smithsonian Museum
- Spinster Sisters Soap
- Sunnyside Shop
- Swissaid Shop
- Tango Zulu
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- The Accessories Shop
- The Artisan Gallery
- The Bridge
- The Eclectic Company
- The Green Phoenix
- The Green Store
- The Most Irresistible Shop in Hilo
- The Pearl Boutique
- The Purple Shoe Project
- The Willie Wags
- Tibor Szanto
- Trade Roots
- TukTuki
- United Nations Association of Southern Arizona (UNASA)
- Utah Hogle Zoo
- UU Fellowship of Vero Beach
- Wake Up Little Suzie
- Wanderlust
- Waterfront Trading Co
- Weltladen + Fair mit Flair Füßen
- Weltladen
- Augsburg
- Backnang

- Darmstadt
- El Mundo Schorndorf
- Ellwangen
- Freudenstadt
- Herdern
- Kempten
- Kirchheim
- Memmingen
- Nürtingen
- Pankow
- Ravensburg
- Schwäbisch Hall
- Treffpunkt Nord-Süd
- Weilheim
- Winnenden
- Würzburg
- WeltMarkt Bietigheim
- Whitney Plantation
- Wild Child Madison
- World Cup Market
- World Next Door
- Worldly Goods
- World's Window
- Yaggz Shea Butter
- Zee Bee Market LLC

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- Semester at Sea
- Star Future Leaders
- Tiffany Cohen Steinke
- University of Wisconsin

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The Callan Family &  
Friends in Honor of  
Melanie Callan Popowich*

VOLUNTEERS:

- Alice Lunardon
- Alison Robinson
- Amy Cain
- Anna Rose Ott
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- Saeunn Gisladottir
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- Terri Winter
- Tricia Hanson
- Veronica Hayes
- Yujie Diao
- Zachary Smith

Indiana University Team:

- Elena E. Mnayarji
- Emmanuel Mawutor
- Felicia Tan
- Jared Burk
- Kennedy Brown
- Moira Corcoran
- Patrick O'Malley
- Precious Price
- Ryan Coleman
- Samuel Scoll
- Summer Johnson

PROSPERITY PARTY HOSTS:

- Barb Orstad & the Grace Lutheran Church of Mora, MN
- Helen Mezzera & the Global Holiday Faire of Vallejo, CA
- Holly Wick
- Kate Nelson & the First Presbyterian Church of Stillwater, MN
- Marisa Lobretto & the Saint Catherine of Siena Catholic Church of Portage, MI
- Mary Kay Boyle & the First Prebyterian Church of Charleston, WV
- Monica Morrissey
- Rachelle Griffin
- Rich & Tami Adam
- Laura Buhs & the Atonement Lutheran Church of Lakewood, CO

# 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](http://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](http://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](http://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](http://www.globalmamas.org/info/prosperityparty)

**Contact Us:** [www.globalmamas.org](http://www.globalmamas.org) - [wholesale@globalmamas.org](mailto:wholesale@globalmamas.org)

Global Mamas U.S.  
P.O. Box 18323  
Minneapolis, MN 55418  
USA  
+1 (612) 781-0455

Global Mamas Ghana  
P.O. Box CC890  
Cape Coast  
Ghana  
+233(0)244-530-467