

# Global Mamas®

## '21-'22 report

[globalmamas.org](http://globalmamas.org)





## To our supporters,

The Fair Trade Zone team sends greetings from one of our new, beautiful, and sustainable buildings.

As we near our 20th anniversary, we're taking some time to reflect on the strength, dedication, and innovative spirit shown by everyone in our community while enduring various challenges these last two years. We have pivoted, made adjustments, and thought more outside the box than ever before. We've continued to meet the ongoing challenges of creating high-quality, fair trade products within the confines of continued supply chain disruptions, significant cost increases for raw materials, and economic inflation; not to mention the endless curve balls the pandemic threw our way. To that end, celebrating the tireless efforts of the Mamas during our 2021-2022 Global Mama of the Year events felt extra special. Join in the celebrations on pages 6-7.

The Mamas continue to be at the heart of everything we do. Our focus has been resolute on ensuring job retention and sustainable incomes organization wide. Over the past two years, \$675,371 was paid in prompt wages to the Mamas. We are proud that the Mamas' wages accounted for 35% of our total revenue of \$1,923,151. Sales have increased by about 20%, getting closer to pre-covid levels, which is encouraging. And, most importantly, we've seen the Mamas grow and flourish, even taking on new roles in leadership (see page 10) and sharing our story globally (see page 11).

### SPECIAL THANKS to our Organizational Donor Partners:

- Alquity Foundation
- Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit
- AVSF EQUITE II Program
- U.S. Agency for International Development
- West Africa Trade & Investment Hub

Thanks to our Global Mamas community, we are settling into new routines and spaces with a renewed spirit. We are grateful to the major grantors who, by providing us the necessary funding, allowed us to position ourselves for continued growth through:

- Modernizing our bath and beauty line and creating more jobs by bringing production in-house at the Fair Trade Zone and by using sustainable packaging such as re-purposed coconut shell containers and water hyacinth paper. See pages 8-9.
- Developing three new products made from jersey-knit cotton - our customers love the new Fit & Flare and Tank Styles that provide more flexibility in fit and still feature our vibrant batiks. Learn how these new styles came about on page 9.
- Tackling hard topics within our community, like gender equity, and combating the multifaceted origins of gender inequality. See what our team learned during this in-depth training on pages 4-5.

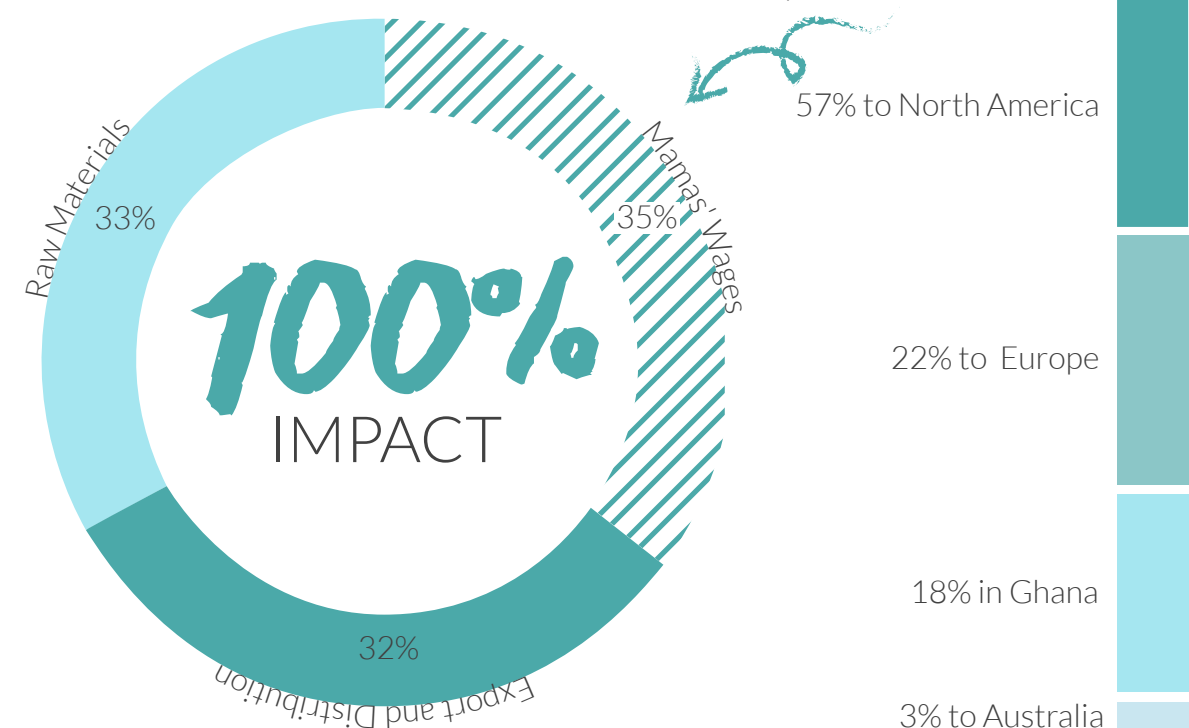
Of course, we want to say a huge thank you to our retail partners who have been steadfast in their commitment to ordering our products despite these challenging economic times. We were thrilled to finally see many of you again, in person, at the NYNOW and Atlanta trade shows. Without your partnership, we would not be able to continue our mission and share the work of the Mamas worldwide.

We have so much to share. Grab your favorite fair trade snack and take some time to read about all the ways in which we are still going strong.

As always, thank you for your continued partnership!

Sincerely,

**The Global Mamas  
Leadership Team**





# focus: gender equity



We know that the origins of gender inequality are multifaceted and may vary from one environment to another; however, its roots are often found in cultural norms surrounding gender roles. With the support of the West Africa Trade and Investment

Hub, we sought to bring attention to this issue in our communities by conducting seven Gender Equality and Social Inclusion (GESI) Training sessions. 652 Mamas, their spouses, and other community members were trained across three different locations.



Participants lined-up based on statements they agreed with, showcasing societal norms and misconceptions.

The training started off with exploring the idea of sex and gender roles. Participants were asked to think critically about the concepts of sex and gender roles, juxtaposed with the biological realities of the different sexes. As a result, we were able to question some of the stereotypes and assumptions around sex and gender roles.

Discussions also addressed social inclusion and how to be more inclusive within our households and communities. Under this, groups explored the cycle of oppression and how ideas and stereotypes feed into this cycle, particularly for more vulnerable groups or minorities within a community. Lastly, gender-based violence (GBV) and domestic violence were covered, including what causes this violence and some myths around GBV. We also shared real-life stories and committed to “say something when they see or hear something”, so we can help victims of GBV wherever we are.

After the training, Franca, Production Manager for Renewable Materials at the Fair Trade Zone said, “It gave us the right information and drew our minds to things that were often assumed to be normal.” Franca also believes that through this training, women were able to learn about their true potential beyond their stereotypes.

Encouraging the involvement of men and other community members helped to pave the way for long-term change within their respective environments. Through this training, everyone understood that it takes all members of society to achieve greater gender equality. We hope to see a fairer ecosystem grow with increased support and understanding as a result.

**"I have learned a lot from Global Mamas. From where I started to where I am now, I am so proud of myself." - Mary, Batiker**



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1) Cape Coast Celebrates Global Mamas of the Year 2021 - Elizabeth, Batiker (second from left) won the top award, while 2) Philip (far right) was recognized as Employee of the Year. 3) The Sewing team was recognized for cooperation at the Fair Trade Zone. 4) Members of the team dressed up for the fashion show. 5) Vivian and many on our team agree that dancing is always a great way to celebrate! 6) Mama representatives from every location traveled to the new Fair Trade Zone in 2022 to participate in the award presentation - it felt great to be together again. 7) Gladys (right) presents the Good Character award to Mama, Letitia. 8) Esther and Elizabeth provided musical interludes.

# growth opportunities



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## 1. Packaging Shea Butter Lotion

Edith and Cynthia package shea butter cream in our new coconut shell containers at the Fair Trade Zone.

## 2. Measuring Ingredients

The skin care team measures all the ingredients used in our products to ensure consistency.

## 3. Selecting Coconut Shells

Before coming to us, the Akooshi team evaluates the coconut shells, which would otherwise become waste, to see which will work for our containers.

## 4. Batiking Knits

Jennifer batiks our classic Keepsake print on our new knit fabric. Batiking on knits requires more time to avoid the fabric stretching out while stamping.

## 5. Modeling New Knit Styles

Rejoice, Allison, and Patricia (L to R) lend their help.

## 6. Prepping Water Hyacinth Paper

Monica (left) and Joyce are testing out adding vegetable seeds to the paper.

## 7.Sorting Water Hyacinth Stems

Edith cuts and sorts the stems prior to use.

One of our core values as an organization is: "We are innovators dedicated to quality, creativity, and continuous improvement." This means that we are constantly striving to develop new products to keep our line fresh and relevant. Our design team, the Mamas, customers, and volunteers are always suggesting wonderful ideas. Yet, we don't always have the resources to act on them.

That is why the last two years have been particularly exciting. Many moving parts aligned for us to dig deeper into our dream list and focus on additions and improvements to our product selection. Building the Fair Trade Zone was a critical foundation for new developments. The additional space, along with grant funding, allowed us to hire more staff, add new machines, and bring in experts to lead initial trainings.

Project leader, Mallory, partnered with teammates and consultants across many departments to launch knit fabric apparel, water hyacinth paper, and an in-house bath and beauty line with sustainable packaging. The team faced many challenges to see these products rolled out. But, the challenges simply made us more proud of the outcomes.

We have wanted to add knit apparel for years. Our designers saw knits gaining traction in the global marketplace and knew our customers would appreciate the addition. However, the fabric intimidated us. In Ghana, most seamstresses are only trained on woven fabrics and aren't familiar with the machines and tools required to work with a stretchy material. With the grant funding, we were able to acquire the machines, invest in the training, and secure our first order of organic knit fabric.

Our batik trainer, Daniel, and technical designer and trainer, Elizabeth, along with the team of batikers and seamstresses at the Fair Trade Zone, spent over a year working

diligently to learn all of the quirks of this new material. It has been quite a journey to launch just one knit product. The Knit Relaxed Dress was showcased in the Fall of 2022, with more products coming in 2023. We started with simple silhouettes and will expand our collection as we increase our skills.

The water hyacinth paper was a natural expansion of our water hyacinth product line. The skills and relationships were already built by the initial development of our water hyacinth home and accessories. Celestine and the hyacinth team are now able to make bags, cards with envelopes, as well as our own packaging for our shea soap.

In addition to the water hyacinth soap wrappers, we are now using re-purposed coconut shells to package our shea butter. This allowed us to achieve a longstanding dream of upgrading our skin care packaging to be all-natural. We were so grateful to our producer partner Akooshi, who helped us through several rounds of development to get the coconut packaging just right.

As part of the transition, we reformulated our bath and beauty products. During which, we were able to source local essential oils, leaving more of the supply chain value in Ghana. Edith and Jennifer, the duo behind the production of our bath and beauty line, lead the charge with the assistance of our consultant partners, Allison and Christabel.

We are proud to offer these new products, create new jobs at the Fair Trade Zone, and eliminate the use of plastic for our bath and beauty packaging.

**"We are joining hand in hand to lift Global Mamas high. Everyone is playing their part to uplift each other and to make the organization a success." - Alice, Seamstress**

# emerging leaders



## MEET JULIET & BENEDICTA

United by a passion for the success of African women, we continue to build our Global Mamas community through strong, long-term relationships with the Mamas and employees. Two of our newest emerging leaders have worked their way up to their manager-level roles.

Meet Juliet, serving as the Financial and Compliance Manager at the Fair Trade Zone. She is well into her fourth year with Global Mamas having started as a Bookkeeper. Known as a wonderful team player and a meticulously hard worker, she has found herself in the perfect role as she completes high-level financial and compliance management tasks. "My favorite thing about my career is to see people do things right as well as spend conscientiously." In her new role, she also encourages others to always do their best. "Don't spend time trying to prove yourself. But let your work speak for you," she says.

Meanwhile, in Cape Coast, Benedicta,

affectionately known as Bene, was promoted to Operations Manager in the summer of 2022. To know her is to be surrounded by joy. She has been with Global Mamas for the last seven years. Having been introduced to the organization through a friend's husband, she also began her career with us as a Bookkeeper.

She soon proved a valuable asset to the organization and served as a Production Manager prior to her recent promotion. In her new role as Operations Manager, she oversees the logistical needs of Cape Coast, Accra, and the Fair Trade Zone locations. This opportunity has allowed Benedicta to continue toward her goal of having a happy, successful, and independent family.

She sees a bright future with Global Mamas. She hopes to hold a higher leadership position in 10 years. "I know that hard work, persistence, and determination will get me where I want to be, and I give that advice to others."

## HIGHLIGHT: DORCAS & BENEDICTA ATTEND THE WFTO SUMMIT IN BERLIN

As a member of the World Fair Trade Organization (WFTO), we are often asked to share our successes with others in the fair trade community. In 2022, we were invited to present at the 16th International Fair Trade Summit in Berlin. Accra Store Manager, Dorcas, and Operations Manager, Benedicta, had the opportunity to share our eco-friendly production

practices with attendees from around the world. This Summit is the world's largest gathering of fair trade businesses and allies. Organized by the WFTO, the Summit's goal is to bring fair trade enterprises, supply chain managers, ethical market leaders, citizens, and supporters together to work on social, economic, and environmental transformation.



Benedicta, staffing our booth at the Summit, said, "Our favorite part of the trip was meeting our customers and hearing their thoughts on our products. It was great how many appreciate our hard work and wonderful products."

Dorcas and Benedicta took center stage during one of the main sessions to discuss how Global Mamas uses recycled, upcycled, and organic materials to handcraft our high-quality pieces. A perfect example of this is our Water Hyacinth Wallet. The Water Hyacinth Wallet is one of the newest additions to our Water Hyacinth Collection and is made using renewable water hyacinth fibers and GOTS certified organic cotton batik. It was a feature at the WFTO Summit and made the list of the top five designs eligible for the 2022 Mohammad Islam Design Award. Global Mamas apparel items were also showcased at the WFTO Fashion Expo, giving potential customers the chance to see examples of our product offering in person.

Aside from the Summit, Dorcas and Benedicta explored Berlin with their host, Gabi, of handtrade, our EU partner. They also visited local stores, met with existing customers, and received product feedback. Dorcas and Benedicta shared that they found the trip to be very educational and enjoyable. We look forward to more opportunities to visit with customers and share our story in the near future.

# thank you

to our Retail Partners,  
Donors, and Volunteers!  
We can't do this without you.

**AUSTRIA**

Chic Ethic Handels  
EZA Fairer Handel  
KLEIDERgrün  
PALETTE  
Weltladen Gneis  
World Fair Trade Shop,  
Innsbruck

**BELGIUM**

Il Fera Beau Demain

**CANADA**

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Canada-Ghana  
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elements4events

Fair mit Flair

FARCAP

Geiger Schuhe

handtrade.GmbH

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LILA LORENA

MEKHADA

Mode Cholet

ONAMI Design

Pachamama Laden

Werkgalerie Hochwart

Wiesenfein

Wollke, Heilbronn

Weltalden:

A Janela, Berlin

Aalen

Albstadt

An der Planie,

Stuttgart

Augsburg

Backnang

Bad Laasphe

Bietigheim

Böblingen

Bornheim

Botnang

Bremen

Bruchsal

Darmstadt

Degerloch

Dettingen

Dieburg

Duisburg

El Mundo,

Schorndorf

Ellwangen

Esslingen

Fellbach

Filderstadt

Freising

Weltalden Cont'd:

Freudenstadt

Füssen

Geldern

Gerberau

Haslach

Heidenheim

Herdern

Hofheim

Immestaad

Kaiserslautern

Karibu, Kassel

Karlsruhe

Kassel

Kaufbeuren

Kempton

Kirchheim

Krefeld

Kressbronn

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Weltladen Taufers

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**IRELAND**

Rainbow Kids

Boutique

The Hunt Museum,

Limerick

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ECOLOGICS AS

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KIDENDA

la tenda de tot el món

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Fair Trade Shop

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**UNITED KINGDOM**

who's wearing what

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of Christ Our Light

Chameleon Blue

Change Boutique

Cherry Street Books

Chesapeake

Chocolates

Cheyenne Mountain

Zoo

Christopher Kimball's

Milk Street

Common Crow

Natural Health

Connected

Curiosity

daiseye

de Young

Eastern National

Elva's Old P.O.

Encore Boutique

Estrog

Fair Isle Books

Fair Trade Winds

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Gallery 408

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Green Hummingbird

Homegrown Pearlridge

Hope Village

HumanKind

in-jeen-yuhs

Island Seed and Feed

Just Creations

Just Fare Market

Just Goods

Kizuri

KMAC Museum

Koguis

Koraa

Latitudes Fair Trade

Laurie Dahl

Lava 9

Leisa Cram

Lillies

Little Bubba Shop

Lore

Lucia's Imports

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Nomad

Norton Museum

Oak

On Centre

One World Goods

Our Saviors

Lutheran Church

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# in 2021-'22...



**100%**  
 of the Mamas  
 received on-the-job  
 training!

**100%** Of the Mamas school-aged children attend school!

**31%** Of the Mamas supported school fees of kids that are not their own.

**99%** Of the Mamas were able to cover their basic living expenses.

**85%** Of the Mamas contributed to retirement savings plans.

**73%** Of the Mamas provided financial support to someone outside of their immediate family.

*"Global Mamas has helped me a lot. All of my children have been educated because of my work with Global Mamas."*  
 - Sabina, seamstress

We built and moved into the **FAIR TRADE ZONE!**



The **Fair Trade Zone** is an eco-friendly manufacturing center that provides sustainable livelihoods to over **80** bead assemblers, batikers, seamstresses, papermakers, weavers, shea butter bath and beauty formulators, and production managers.



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