OUR MISSION

Mercado Global empowers indigenous women artisans in Guatemala to break the cycle of poverty by connecting them to international markets, providing business skills training and fostering sustainable livelihoods for them and their families.
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Dear Friends,

This has truly been a year of change. At Mercado Global, we are scaling a pioneering model within the social enterprise arena, while our impact is extending beyond the non-profit sector and redefining standards in the fashion industry and global sourcing practices. We have moved beyond a market-based solution to poverty in Guatemala to become global innovators leading by example.

In the past year, our retail presence has exploded, positioning our products in retailers across the United States and expanding our reach beyond home and into Canada, Japan, and Europe. The most important impact of this upswing is that we’re bringing more income to partner artisans. This opens up a world of possibilities for rural indigenous women, allowing them to invest in the things they need the most, from food and clothing to health care and education for their children.

But we’re looking deeper: we are moving full-steam ahead to leverage this growth to have a profound impact on the global fashion industry. We are ramping up efforts on our three-year Educate to Empower Campaign to bring in new communities in Guatemala, strengthen our training programs, and expand our working capital fund to help first-time artisans finance tools and raw materials. Your commitment to this initiative has been overwhelming, keeping us on track to meet our campaign goal of $1.25 million by 2015. We are proud to announce that this year, we cross the half-way mark toward this goal, thanks to your support.

At Mercado Global we are committed to the future of girls and women in Guatemala, as well as artisans around the world who can benefit from responsible sourcing practices. Our efforts are breaking paradigms, and we are proud to be recognized for this work by a variety of leaders, from the Clinton Global Initiative to the United Nations, to the sales partners who have chosen to adopt this model and build strong foundations for cross-sector partnerships as this industry evolves.

“We have moved beyond a market-based solution to poverty in Guatemala to become global innovators leading by example.”

Thank you for building this with us. This year has marked a turning point in what we’re able to accomplish not only as a single organization but as part of a broader movement for responsible sourcing.

As always, we invite you to communicate with us or any member of our Board. We are humbled by your support of our vision and look forward to creating further broad-sweeping change on the ground in Guatemala as well as in the sourcing practices of retailers around the globe.

Sincerely,

Garrard R. Beeney
Board Chair

Ruth DeGolia
Executive Director
1. PROVIDING A MARKET-BASED SOLUTION
By moving beyond status-quo labor practices and building skills as business leaders, indigenous women artisans can break the cycle of poverty for themselves and their families.

2. CHANGING THE SOURCING PATTERNS OF THE FASHION INDUSTRY
With the growing consumer demand for ethically-sourced products, sustainable sourcing can enact positive change on a global level through existing market channels.

RETHINKING THE STATUS QUO
At Mercado Global, we are convinced that great ideas have the power to shape the future.

Our model is based on these premises:

BREAKING THE CYCLE OF POVERTY

EDUCATE
Provide business education and leadership training to women who may have never had a formal education.

EMPOWER
With increased income, artisans send their children to school, buy nutritious food, and solve other needs within their communities.

CONNECT
Create opportunities for income through access to international markets.
THE MULTIPLIER EFFECT
INVESTING IN WOMEN

At Mercado Global we understand the pressing need to invest in women. We believe that the key to economic development and social well-being lies in unleashing their potential and strengthening their capabilities. Studies have shown that women invest ninety cents of every dollar towards improving their families and local communities, while men will invest thirty to forty cents in the same areas*.

Historically, partner artisans have been subjected to discrimination based on their race and gender, and have faced an uphill battle in earning a sustainable living. Mercado Global finds in their Mayan heritage an invaluable opportunity – the connection between the craftsmanship embedded in their history and the demand from international markets for artisanal products.

We offer comprehensive, donor-funded, community-based programs that train artisans with the skills necessary to manage thriving businesses and effectively administer their newly-earned income. We then connect artisans to large-scale sales opportunities outside of Guatemala - tapping into higher-end markets that can command fair wages and fuel a sustainable business model.

Almost 20 years after the end of a civil war, Guatemala is a revitalized country ready to catch up with Latin America’s growing economic opportunities.

While Guatemala struggles to improve education, infrastructure and economic development, it remains a country marked by drastic social differences and inequality.
Guatemalan women experience one of the highest rates of violence in the world, with domestic violence levels of around 90% in the indigenous communities where Mercado Global works.

2 in 3 indigenous children go to bed hungry every night - the highest malnutrition rate in the Western hemisphere and fourth-highest in the world.

The indigenous population comprises 60% of the total population in Guatemala however, 75% of indigenous Guatemalans live below the poverty line ($2/day) and 58% live in extreme poverty ($1.25/day).

On average, Guatemalans receive 4.1 years of schooling - but indigenous Guatemalan children attend school for just 1.9 years and are more likely to drop out without attaining literacy than non-indigenous students.

Guatemalan women experience one of the highest rates of violence in the world, with domestic violence levels of around 90% in the indigenous communities where Mercado Global works.
AN INNOVATIVE APPROACH

Mercado Global provides a pioneering approach to address the cause, not just the symptoms, of cyclical poverty: LACK OF ACCESS TO INCOME.

Our model is based on a comprehensive empowerment cycle that begins by linking artisan cooperatives to global markets where sales opportunities are sustainable and plentiful, and international retailers are eager to source socially-responsible products and invest in rural entrepreneurs.

Once the connection is made, Mercado Global introduces partner artisans to a community-based curriculum that encompasses training in financial literacy, business management, self-esteem, family health, and other areas to which artisans may have never been exposed, ensuring that they can leverage their income to break themselves and their families out of poverty long-term.

OUR EMPOWERMENT MODEL

Connecting artisans to international markets
Empowering women to become rural entrepreneurs
Building an industry-level design program to offer designer-quality products
When we invest in partner artisans as business owners, that investment is translated into designer-quality, responsibly-sourced products for our partner retailers and the end consumer. Investment in product design means sustainable incomes for artisans and a sustainable business model that can be scaled and replicated around the world.

“I’ve improved the quality of my work. As the leader of my cooperative, it gave me more confidence to pursue new opportunities that can improve the lives of my fellow artisans.”

- Isabel

MERCADO GLOBAL
PARTNER ARTISAN
OUR PROGRAMS | BUILDING STRONGER COMMUNITIES

We provide a complete community-based curriculum to partner artisans, from legalizing cooperatives to designing products for international markets, managing newly-earned income, and investing in the tools and technology needed to grow one’s business.

Beyond building strong community businesses, we are dedicated to improving the lives of our partner artisans and their families. In partnership with international experts, Mercado Global has also developed a comprehensive family health program that helps our artisans and their communities maintain a healthy lifestyle.

Each of our training programs employs visual and hands-on activities designed to ensure information retention by the largely illiterate population. Programs are taught using a “train the trainer” method, boosting content retention rates and empowering women to share the content to other members in their communities. All trainings are provided by Mercado Global’s own staff, who speak the local indigenous languages and are part of the communities we serve.
Entrepreneurial Management: Jumpstarting rural women artisans into becoming first-time business owners

Developed in partnership with International Development graduates from leading universities, this module provides partner artisans with the required knowledge to run prosperous community businesses, including budgeting, financial literacy, cash-flow management, paying taxes, and saving money for the future.

Economic Empowerment: Providing partner artisans with access to microloans

This unit gives women access to tools that help them work more efficiently and earn a higher income. We offer women artisans access to a revolving microloan fund for industrial sewing machines and foot looms, which can be prohibitively expensive to artisans otherwise. Loans are offered on flexible payment schedules that fit artisans’ needs; once the loan is repaid by the borrowing artisan, the lending opportunity is opened to another woman.

Women’s Leadership: Strengthening the next generation of women leaders

As subjects of ongoing sexual and ethnic discrimination, indigenous women face numerous barriers to owning a community business. This section gives partner artisans the tools and support to recognize themselves as leaders, helping build their self-esteem and promote positive dynamics within their households and cooperatives. Training sessions focus on conflict resolution, goal achievement, and team building.

Health & Wellness: Building stronger communities through healthy family care

Working in isolated, rural communities, Mercado Global has identified the need to address the immediate and preventable health issues that partner artisans and their families face. Training covers topics like the correct use of pharmaceuticals, sanitation and hygiene, occupational health, and nutrition. Mercado Global trainers, in partnership with a team of doctors from Case Western Reserve University Hospitals, provide tools that will impact the well-being of the entire community for generations to come.
“I wouldn’t be able to contribute to my family’s education, food and health without the help of Mercado Global. The income that I earn is of great help and I thank Mercado for taking us into consideration.”

- Marta Julia
MERCADO GLOBAL PARTNER ARTISAN
MEET MARTA JULIA

Marta Julia is mother to two young children and a one-year-old baby. At age 28, she dreams of her three kids attending college and obtaining stable jobs that can give them a brighter future.

Marta Julia used to sell her jewelry work to a middleman who in turn sold her crafts in the local marketplace and gave her a small percentage of the sales. Earnings from these sales were barely enough to cover the monthly household expenses.

But two years ago, her life took a turn for the best. Joining Mercado Global as a jewelry artisan and then transitioning into other areas of work, Marta Julia discovered a deep potential within herself. As an artisan in the informal economy, Marta never had the opportunity to work in sample development - and being able to take a paper pattern and transform it into an actual piece of work became one of Marta’s greatest sources of pride.

Her constant pursuit of new skills has led Marta to become proficient in leather detailing and pattern cutting, and she will soon be taking on textile and leather sewing as well.

Today, life for Marta Julia and her family is steadily improving. With income earned from working at Mercado Global, Marta and her husband were able to obtain a small loan from a local bank and commit to the monthly payments without the worries of falling behind. They are using the funds to build the family’s first home, a step toward their dreams for the future.
REVOLUTIONIZING THE FASHION INDUSTRY

The consumer demand for ethically-sourced products is growing, and we are helping create sustainable supply chains for retailers who may have never sourced from a fair trade vendor before.

As we expand our sales partnerships, it is evident that the vision for sustainable sourcing practices and “profits through principles” is becoming a reality. Our retail partners recognize the potential behind the Mercado Global model and the opportunity for rural indigenous women to access the income and assets needed to send their daughters to school - helping them break the cycle of poverty.

“Mercado Global products match our commitment to unusual, surprising and beautifully designed product while supporting socially-responsible enterprises and empowering women.”

- RED ENVELOPE
In just the first quarter of 2013, we doubled our product sales totaling almost half of 2012 annual sales. This upswing represents a key change in our model, from selling primarily Guatemalan styles and prints to designing contemporary collections that blend Guatemalan heritage with today’s consumer demand.

In addition to these new retailers, our products can now be found in over 100 boutiques across the United States.

We signed 10 new specialty retailers this year!
In spring of 2012, Mercado Global launched an ambitious scaling campaign to double our impact in Guatemala and exponentially increase our effect on global sourcing practices by 2015.

With an astonishing show of support from our donors, we have placed products in over 100 new boutiques and 9 new major retailers, initiated a re-training program to help artisans gain more competitive skills, and are on track to meet our campaign goal.

Support towards our scaling campaign funds these areas:

- Expanding into new communities in Guatemala
- Strengthening education and training programs to help women become successful entrepreneurs
- Building a working capital fund to scale sales for all artisans
We are grateful for the critical role our supporters have played helping us drive the movement toward socially-responsible sourcing!
92% of artisans now send their children to school with income earned through Mercado Global, an almost 30% increase in school enrollment rates

61% of artisans report starting to save, or increasing what they can save, since partnering with Mercado Global

70% of artisans have become more involved in household decision-making since partnering with Mercado Global

After partnering with Mercado Global, artisans are able to use savings instead of taking out loans to cover health care costs

Education can now be a priority. Partner artisans cited education as their highest expense, whereas before partnering with Mercado Global, women prioritized food as their highest expense.
“Without Mercado Global, I would be without work. Mercado Global has given me work and lots of experience. Now I have money to buy what I need, and I can send my children to school. This is very important to me.”

- Maria Vilma

MERCADO GLOBAL PARTNER ARTISAN
YEAR IN REVIEW

What an incredible year of growth and change for Mercado Global. Here are some of the year’s highlights, made possible by you, our supporters and partners.

Joined global leaders in the Clinton Global Initiative

Mercado Global was granted membership into CGI’s year-long effort to forge innovative solutions to the world’s most pressing issues. The Initiative’s 2013 “Scaling Fair Trade for All,” track focuses on encouraging businesses to incorporate sustainable sourcing into their supply chains. Mercado Global’s unique access to high-volume, specialty sales channels has made this a very fruitful alignment, with sharing of best practices, commitments to impact scaling, and cross-sector collaboration with other leaders in policy, sustainable enterprise, and business.

Participated in the United Nations Every Woman Every Child Roundtable

Joining fashion industry leaders and dignitaries to discuss the impact the industry can have on meeting the United Nations Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), Mercado Global highlighted how its programs improve the well-being of women and children in Guatemala while harnessing the power of markets to create sustainable change in the developing world.

Featured in TEDx Talk by Kellogg Foundation CEO as a “world changer”

“I wonder what comes into your mind when you think of the word ‘entrepreneur,’” posits Sterling Speirn in his April 2013 TEDx Talk at the University of Michigan. “I think of people like Ruth DeGolia.” Speirn, the president and CEO of the W.K. Kellogg Foundation, highlights Ruth as an example of an entrepreneur in a talk entitled “Untapped Giving” about the crossover between philanthropy and enterprise. Speirn discusses the importance of prioritizing social returns in non-profit as well as for-profit investing. “We can find more bottom lines,” says Speirn, “and in this way we can change the world.”
Expanded community-based health curriculum

As part of our ongoing partnership with Case Western Reserve University School of Medicine and University Hospitals Case Medical Center, Mercado Global has developed a comprehensive health curriculum with periodic evaluations and an emphasis on preventative health. Developed under the guidance of Dr. Masahiro Morikawa, Director of Case Western Reserve’s Global Health Track, the newly-improved curriculum provides partner artisans with the opportunity to understand and properly address their greatest health concerns, from proper ventilation while cooking to occupational health.

Selected as a hunger alleviation partner by the Government of Guatemala

The Zero Hunger initiative, launched by the Government of Guatemala in 2012 and supported by USAID and other international actors, aims to reduce child malnutrition rates in Guatemala by 10% by the end of 2015. As part of this program, Mercado Global was asked to focus our expansion in the five regions of the country with the highest rates of chronic malnutrition, as Mercado Global’s model addresses one of the underlying causes of undernutrition in rural communities of Guatemala—lack of income-earning opportunities.

Hosted inaugural Mother - Daughter trip

In June 2013, Mercado Global hosted a group of eight mother-daughter pairs from Silicon Valley, CA. The group spent a week in Guatemala with our staff visiting partner artisan communities, sharing the experiences of being a woman across cultural bounds and learning about the country’s rich history. In preparation for this trip, the group raised over $12,000 from their friends, family and community to contribute toward the costs of on-boarding of a new Mercado Global partner community and expand work opportunities for indigenous artisans. Contact community@mercadoglobal.org for information on future trips to Guatemala.
FINANCIAL STATEMENT

100% of donor support goes directly to program expenses. All fundraising expenses and supporting services are funded through sales revenue.
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<th>ASSETS</th>
<th>2012</th>
<th>2011</th>
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<td>Cash</td>
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<td>Inventories</td>
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<td>Total Assets</td>
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<th>LIABILITIES</th>
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<tr>
<td>Loans payable - current</td>
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<td>Accounts payable</td>
<td>$ 12,533</td>
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<td>Accrued liabilities</td>
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<th>NET ASSETS</th>
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<td>Unrestricted fund balance</td>
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<td>$ 80,042</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total Net Assets</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total Liabilities and Net Assets</td>
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<td>$ 108,889</td>
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<th>UNRESTRICTED NET ASSETS</th>
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<tr>
<td>REVENUES</td>
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<tr>
<td>Contributions and grants</td>
<td>$ 244,080</td>
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<td>Program Service Sales</td>
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<td>$ 271,938</td>
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<tr>
<td>Net assets released from temporary restrictions</td>
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<td>$ 30,000</td>
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<td>Total Revenues and reclassifications</td>
<td>$ 632,557</td>
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<th>EXPENDITURES</th>
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<td>Program services</td>
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<td>$ 529,412</td>
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<th>TEMPORARILY RESTRICTED NET ASSETS</th>
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<tr>
<td>Total Temporarily Restricted Net Assets</td>
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<td>Increase (decrease) in net assets</td>
<td>$(17,806)</td>
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<td>Net assets - beginning of year</td>
<td>$ 80,042</td>
<td>$ 136,771</td>
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<td>Net Assets - end of year</td>
<td>$ 62,236</td>
<td>$ 80,042</td>
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</table>
OUR SUPPORTERS

We thank all of our donors for their generous gifts from July 1, 2012-June 30, 2013.

$20,000+ Educate to Empower Executive Circle
Garrard Beeney and Evan Mason
Levi Strauss & Co.
Mrs. Judith O’Brien and Mr. Brad Carl O’Brien

$10,000-$19,999 Educate to Empower Campaign Chairs
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- Laura Bachrach-Prober
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- Bullock Family Foundation
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- Duarte Design
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Linda Yates and Paul Holland
James and Laura Young
Mercado Global establishes alliances with different actors, who stand as partners in the movement for poverty alleviation through social enterprise. We create win-win relationships with our supporters, helping them promote social enterprises within their own communities and create a lasting change in the international sourcing industry.

Mercado Global offers tailored partnership opportunities in different areas, including corporate gifts packages and conference bags, brown-bag lunch presentations and speaker roles, and executive insight trips to our operations base in Guatemala. We provide the opportunity to directly impact the lives of indigenous women in need through a proven market-based model, while enhancing our partners’ profiles within the communities they serve.

Contact partnerships@mercadoglobal.org for more information about this program.
MERCADO GLOBAL TEAM

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Tim Schultz
Claire Stewart
Alexandra Zafran
Mercado Global’s work to empower women artisans is made possible through tax-deductible contributions. Support our artisans by making a donation: visit www.mercadoglobal.org or call (718) 838-9908.