Ruth DeGolia
Co-Founder and Executive Director, Mercado Global

Over the past twelve years, Ruth DeGolia has overseen Mercado Global's growth from a small non-profit working with a dozen artisans in Guatemala's highlands to its recognition as a pioneer in the ethical fashion and social enterprise spaces. Since its inception, Mercado Global has provided fair wage income to a network of over 450 indigenous Guatemalan artisans in 40 cooperatives, affecting 2,700 dependents, connecting them to over 300 international retailers and vendors including Anthropologie, Calypso St. Barth, Garnet Hill, Goop, J.Crew, and Levi Strauss.

Ruth was named among the “World’s Best Emerging Social Entrepreneurs” by the Echoing Green Foundation in 2004 and was selected as one of the “15 People Who Make America Great” by Newsweek magazine in 2006, featured on the magazine’s cover along with Brad Pitt and Soledad O’Brien of CNN. She also received the William H. Orrick prize for her research on globalization in Guatemala and won the prestigious Y50K Business Plan Competition for social ventures, both while an undergrad at Yale University. Ms. DeGolia has spoken at the Clinton Global Initiative, the Global Summit for Women, PIMCO, Stanford University, and the United Nations.

Speaking Engagements
Ruth has shared her experience and insight at numerous venues, including:

- Every Woman Every Child panel, “How to Achieve a Shared Value Approach in Delivering Health to Underserved Markets” (2016)
- Announcement of Mercado Global’s Commitment to Action (2013)
- Keynote address at the Stanford Women in Business Conference (2010)
- Closing plenary at the Yale Women's Leadership Conference (2009)
- Opening remarks at Global Summit for Women, Berlin (2007)

Media Links

- **Festival of Media LatAm**: Exclusive interview, Ruth DeGolia, Mercado Global
  http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YEo5ycKpiMY
- **Miami Herald**: Mercado Global Connects Guatemalan Weavers to High-Fashion World
- **YOXI**: Ruth DeGolia Named Social Innovation Rock Star
  sir.tv/profile/ruth-degolia
- **The Huffington Post**: Yale Student Brings Jobs and Self-Esteem to Guatemalan Women
About Mercado Global

Mercado Global is a non-profit social enterprise with an innovative approach to fighting poverty and empowering indigenous women in Guatemala’s highlands by connecting their artisan cooperatives to sales opportunities in the U.S. on an unprecedented scale.

By providing business development support and connecting artisans to these opportunities, Mercado Global is helping its partner artisans to be a source of change in global sourcing practices.

Mercado Global has made great strides in developing an innovative, market-based model for fighting poverty in rural Latin America, Partner artisans are thriving in comparison to the national average in Guatemala:

- 99% of artisans’ children are enrolled in school, compared to only 35% of children in Guatemala’s rural areas.
- 64% of artisans have a personal bank account in a country where only 27% of the indigenous population has one.
- 73% of artisans have access to the food and nutrition they need while 69% of Guatemala’s indigenous population and 55% of its rural population faces chronic undernutrition.
- 72% of artisans have reported saving or saving more since starting with Mercado Global, compared to 60% in 2013.

Since its inception in 2004, Mercado Global has provided:

- Over $3 million in sales for indigenous artisans in Guatemala
- More than 735,000 hours of work to indigenous women in Guatemala
- 178,468 accessories such as clutches, bags, and pillows to consumers in the international market
- 341+ sales partners with access to ethically-made product
- 2,500+ free education and technical trainings to artisans

See [www.mercadoglobal.org](http://www.mercadoglobal.org) for more information, impact metrics, and photos.