



MERCADO GLOBAL

ARTISAN TRAINING AND INCOME DEVELOPMENT (MGATI)

PHASE 2

LASC, FFTP & MERCADO GLOBAL

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| Month/Year | June 2024 | | |
| Project Code | | Update #2 | Second Report |
| Project Name | Mercado Global Artisan Training and Income Development (MGATI) | | |
| City | Guatemala | | |
| Category | Training | | |

| Progress | Review |
|--|--------|
| Updates align with the current status report and this is the final report. | |
| Photos represent each aspect of progress; An explanatory note is provided on each. | |
| Updates include budget execution and overrun expenses. | |

Introduction

In collaboration with FFTP and through the support of LASC, Mercado Global has initiated its Artisan Training and Income Development project. The project was designed to provide 450 Indigenous women artisans with technical training, business development, and the production tools necessary to access the international market over three years.

The Indigenous women who are participating in this project have a history and culture of weaving but lack access to resources and a viable market, making it nearly impossible to earn a living from their traditional talents. These women have endured extreme poverty, the Guatemalan Civil War, discrimination, and a lack of economic and educational opportunities. Forty-eight percent of the rural Indigenous population lives in poverty, earning an average of \$1.25 or less per day. As a result, Guatemala has the 4th highest rate of chronic malnutrition in the world.

Through technical training and business development support, artisans can build their skills and earn income by participating in fulfilling orders with major international retailers. Skills developed during training also support women in revenue-earning activities beyond their partnership with Mercado Global. Business development support empowers women to become entrepreneurs, guiding them through the process of creating and successfully managing community businesses.

Collectively, this training and market access allows them to increase their income and have access to sustainable revenue sources to support their families.

NOTE: The following report covers Mercado Global's progress from January 1 through June 30.

Narrative of Progress

Phase 2 of Mercado Global's Artisan Training and Income Development project is from April - June 2024. Now, at a halfway point for year 1 we are beginning to see the real impact the training provided by this project can have. The women participating in the program are achieving tremendous success, as shown by the high rates at which they are passing quality control standard upon completion of each phase of training(detailed below). The training sessions are the first important step for women to be able to work with Mercado Global on orders for major retailers, something that will greatly increase their earning capacity. We are already seeing this translate into income as they begin participating in international orders and building their own local market.

During the project's second quarter, our primary focus was as follows:

- Completed onboarding of the final artisans into the project,
- Completed delivery of the majority of tools & training materials to the communities,
- Improved the artisan's skills via technical training classes, including through improved monitoring & evaluation systems for the curriculum and trainers to help us ensure we're having the greatest impact possible from the classes,
- Recruited a consultant to build our artisan database,
- Kicked off the bi-annual social impact survey planning and setup process, and
- Recruited and onboarded a lead technical trainer expert for sewing to help us further improve the content and impact of our sewing curriculum and training support.

The following recaps progress on our core project indicators this quarter. We are on track for continued progress and growth during Phase 3 of the project.

Beneficiaries

This project's beneficiaries are Indigenous women artisans ranging from 18-65 years old. Indirect beneficiaries include dependent family members of the beneficiary.

Direct Beneficiaries

Project Goal: 450

Total as of June 30: 450

Family Beneficiaries

Project goal: 2,700

Total as of June 30: 2,700



Artisan Mayra with her daughter from artisan group Tejedoras Manitas Magicas from Aldea Patanatic, Panajachel during a technical training class

Production Tools and Materials

Mercado Global has completed project purchases on calendar for the project. Last quarter we distributed looms, sewing machines and other tools. This quarter we distributed sewing toolkits and brocade kits to each artisan group per their specialty. These kits have been particularly impactful in facilitating the efficient participation of artisans in training opportunities and orders.

These tool kits have served as a great utility for the artisans during their technical training. For our sewers, the kit includes items such as measuring sticks, scissors, needles, threads, and a tape measure. The brocade kits of the weavers included materials to help them repair their weaving tools and manage the weaving process, such as a saw, hammer, scissors, and a tape measure.



Community Based Education team receiving and organizing weaving tools to send to our partner artisans



Sewing Toolkit



Brocade Kits for Weaving Artisans



Artisan Group Las Gladiolas from Chuisuc, Olinstepeque, Quetzaltenango receiving their weaving tools



Artisan Group Tejedoras las Rosas from Aldea la Esperanza, Cruz de Loza, Olinstepeque, Quetzaltenango receiving their weaving tools



Industrial Sewing Machines being delivered to artisan group La Artesania Claveles in Santiago Atitlan, Solola

Training

Due to the political unrest and dangers of travel in January, we had a slow start to the project. However, over the past three months, Mercado Global trainers have increased the rate at which they reached artisans with training sessions. From January to June, over 450 training sessions were held.

We are also excited to share that our initiative to improve the content, structure and monitoring of our weaving curriculum has had great results. We worked with our top weaving trainer to improve the content of our weaving curriculum and develop a better system for monitoring progress against detailed training benchmarks, making it easier for us to do interventions and provided additional support to trainers and artisans as needed in the process of implementing the weaving trainings. We also implemented a system for regularly sharing best practices between technical trainers and doing additional training for the trainers themselves to ensure our curriculum is implemented in a standard, best practices way. We also worked with our weaving expert to develop a list of other key initiatives to further optimize the impact of our weaving training program, including customizing the size of the looms to the smaller stature of the women receiving them (as standard looms in Guatemala are designed for men, who are larger) and developing a system for providing extra “reinforcement” training sessions for artisans who have more difficulty learning any one of the techniques. These changes are already resulting in better, quicker results from our weaving workshops.

Attendance at our technical training workshops remains high, with a continued 94% participation rate among artisans. Overall, artisans participating in the program this year are excelling in their trainings and steadily building their skill sets and motivation. For example, our weaving groups have consistently turned in their fabrics on time after their technical training classes. We have attributed this success to our constant monitoring and support from our weaving trainers and the increased motivation from our partner artisans.

The success of our weaving programming is also shown by the fact that 94% of artisans this quarter passed quality control on their first try, with only 26 artisans (6%) having to repeat a technical training skill. These numbers reflect the impact the technical training classes are having in imparting these skills to artisans and preparing them to participate in sales opportunities.

In June, we also recruited a lead sewing trainer, with extensive expertise, who will support the improvement of our sewing curriculum just as our lead weaving trainer has done for our weaving curriculum. With the support of this expert, we expect to make similar adjustments to our sewing curriculum and programming as those done to our weaving

programming, to improve overall efficiency. We will be integrating the expert's recommendations during the final two phases of the project.

An additional success from this quarter is the progress of our local market access program. We have significantly expanded our business development curriculum to provide more support to artisans in building their own local market to compliment income from international sales, and we are seeing the results of that increased income from the local market for artisans this quarter.



Artisan Group Jab'el Ixoqi from Barrio Tzantzir Alto, San Andres Semetabaj, Solola receiving a detailing technical training class from technical trainer Maria Jose



Weaving expert Dario Maldonado giving a technical training class to the artisan group Artesanas Chicamposanto from San Pablo La Laguna, Sololá



Artisan Group Tejedoras Flor de Mayo from Aldea la Esperanza, San Juan Ostuncalco, Quetzaltenango receiving a technical training class by Maria Kosh

Earnings & Savings

Mercado Global empowers Indigenous women by providing vital tools to gain financial independence. One of the key ways we do that is by teaching the importance of each woman having her own bank and savings accounts.

As of June 30th, out of the 450 artisans in the program, 126 artisans have opened a bank account. We are close to reaching our goal of 30% of all artisans (135) having a bank account. We expect that in the following three months, we will have reached this indicator successfully.

Before an artisan can produce a product to be sold, they must be trained and have their sample approved. This quarter we focused on teaching the artisans the basic technical weaving and sewing they need to sell their products locally and internationally. Now, as we move to the third phase of the project, the artisans will begin to participate in orders at a higher rate, and we will focus on teaching artisans the importance of setting aside a portion of their earnings as savings. Currently, we have not met the indicator of 40% of all artisans saving per quarter but are hopeful that his number will be met in the coming three months.

As artisans complete the first phases of participation in our technical training and business development programs, they are beginning to participate in sales both internationally and locally. The project goal is that after one year the women in this project will be earning at a per annum rate of \$996 (\$83 per month). This was the first quarter that artisans participating in the project began participating in orders, now that they have begun to gain the basic technical and business skills to produce and sell successfully at an introductory level. This quarter, women in the project earned at an average per annum rate of \$375.48 per year (\$31.29 per month). This includes a combination of income from international orders and the local market, and puts them on track to achieve the overall project goal by the end of the project.

The earning capabilities of the artisans will continue to grow as they master the skills they have already been taught through practice and learn additional skills over the final phases of the project. Next quarter, women participating in the program will work on orders from clients including iCapital, Shopbop, and Levis, amongst others!

Artisan Database

From February through April of this year we met with the reporting teams at several other international organizations that have built beneficiary databases similar to what we seek for our own artisan database. We sought to learn best practices and download their recommendations regarding the software platform and consultants to hire to help us build the database. Our conversations with Cosecha, an agricultural organization working in Nicaragua, and Grameen International, were particularly helpful. We decided to use the software and consulting team recommended by Cosecha, as the functionality in terms of data entry and reporting best matched what we seek for this project and the population we serve.

In May we hired a consultant to provide an official project proposal to work on the artisan database. The initial contract was for a 10-hour discovery phase where our team reviewed with the consultant how Mercado Global operates and the goals for the database. The consultant built a flow of the structure for how the platform Appsheet would work and also outlined clear project deliverables.

We signed a contract with the consultant we chose in June. During the first project phase, he is configuring the home page and designing how multiple users from the Community-Based Education Team will interact with the database.

Solución Propuesta



Bi-Annual Social Impact Assessment

We have organized around program team workflow and community travel schedules in the organization to complete our bi-annual social impact assessment by the end of July. We recruited a lead researcher from the University del Valle to oversee implementation of the assessment. She is helping us update our survey, the training manual for the women we will hire to implement the assessment, and the tool we use to analyze survey results.

Artisan Story

Manuela Carmelina Ixquimé Quino Morales

Manuela is a 38-year-old single mother of two children and a participant in Mercado Global's Artisan Training and Income Development Project. She joined the program as part of the Artisan Group Moloj Ixoqui from Panimatzalam, San Andrés Semetabaj to get ahead and give the best for her son and daughter.

From when she first joined Mercado Global, she has overcome her fear of using a foot loom and now participates in the weaving program and serves her cooperative as president. Manuela is known for being a bright light and a visionary. She says that for her "nothing is impossible, everything is possible and she does not give up."



When we talk about woman empowerment, Manuela is one of many of our partner artisans who show us daily how hard work pays off. She works hard to serve her family and community by participating in local functions. She is a fast learner and has been able to learn quickly technical training skills and has moved up to the intermediate level of Mercado Global's programming.

Manuela sets herself apart by being a great leader in her constant motivation to the other women in her cohort and her constant demonstration to others that "weaving work is not difficult at all; everything is easy and it only takes a different process of learning."

Annex



Artisan Group Jades Canoenses from San Andres Semetabaj, Sololá during a detailing technical training class



Artisan Group: Diseños Xe Kuku Abaj from San Juan La Laguna, Sololá with facilitator Hilda Mendoza during a community-based health education class.



Facilitator Sara Cosigua teaming up with strategic partner COLUA to speak about Mercado Global's program to recruit more sewing artisans in early April. This meeting led to our final two groups joining (Grupo Moda y Estilo & SEREBY) from the Sololá area.



Artisans Artesanas Orquideas from San Andrés, Sololá, practicing their skills in an overlock machine during a technical training class.



Artisans Tejedoras Bellas del Lago from Caserío Tzanguacal, Cerro de Oro, Santiago Atitlán at a weaving technical training class.



Artisan Group Manantial de Vida from Caserío Chuacruz, Pujujil II, Sololá receiving training on how to use an overlock machine..



Artisan Group Cruz de Loza from Aldea la Esperanza, Caserío Cruz de Lazo, Olintepeque Quetzaltenango learning how to align the threads during a technical training class.



Sewing Expert providing technical support to artisan Lilian Eugenia Choror Rosales from Artisan Group Moda y Estilo in Sololá.