

Millennium Cities Initiative

EARTH INSTITUTE | COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY

BANTAMA MARKET CLINIC

ENHANCING WOMEN'S LIVES IN KUMASI, GHANA

The Millennium Cities Initiative, with support from the Kumasi Metropolitan Assembly (KMA) and Health Directorate (KMED), recognized a need to improve access to healthcare and credit for women traders in the Bantama Market. MCI began a series of discussions with women traders to better understand their situation and improve their overall health and financial future.

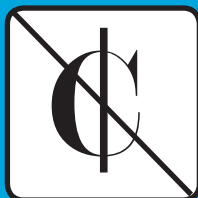
SITUATION

Poor health

- Unmonitored diabetes & obesity
- Undetected reproductive cancers

Extreme financial instability

- 85% of women were the sole/major breadwinners for their households
- 6 out of 10 had fewer than 6 years of formal education
- Inability to grow their businesses
- Difficulty providing for their families



BARRIERS

Limited access to healthcare

- Less than 10% of women had health screenings for high blood pressure or high blood sugar within the last 5 years
- Only 2% of women received screenings for cervical cancer
- No women had received mammograms

Limited access to credit

- 3/4 of women said the major source of stress in their lives was their inability to get credit at reasonable rates, to grow their businesses and support their families

4
out of
5

women expressed the desire for a reliable market health clinic

RESPONSE

MCI partnered with KMA, KMED and Self Help International to establish the Bantama Market Clinic in September 2013, the first of its kind, to:

Offer reliable and accessible health-care through:

- Counseling + health screenings
- Timely patient referrals
- Treatment for minor ailments
- Reproductive health and family planning
- Child health and welfare services

Establish a Social Capital Credits scheme that:

- Rewards women for engaging in acts beneficial to themselves and their community
- Offers credit that can be used to purchase rewards, such as umbrellas for their stalls or school supplies for their children
- Facilitates small loan applications from Self Help International to help grow businesses

SUCCESS

Improved healthcare accessibility and services for women traders:

- 1,522 assessments have been conducted on 316 market women; treatment and referrals were provided as needed

Increased financial stability:

- 16 SoCC groups of 3-5 women each have been established
- Self Help International has disbursed 25,000 Ghana cedis (more than \$7,300) in small loans, with an interest rate of 30% and no collateral required – very rare in Ghana

Women are working in partnership with one another to improve health and financial outcomes for their families and community.

