



The Fabric of Change for Women and Girls

How Mothers' Groups are Creating Opportunities for Women in Rural Malawi

Photo: Lesley Gittings

In Malawi, over half the population live in poverty due in part to missed educational opportunities. Recent data indicates that only 69% of Malawian women are literate, compared to 81% of men. Mothers' groups are finding innovative ways to improve this for the next generation while also creating new economic opportunities for themselves.

School Girls Miss up to 25% of Their School Year

FAWEMA, one of MATCH's local partners in Malawi, has been working for 20 years to empower women and girls through education. One of their approaches includes forming local mothers' groups to address the many obstacles their daughters face to achieving a full education. Last year, one group identified a significant barrier for girls: young women miss 3 - 5 days of school per month because they lack proper sanitary products. That is, they are receiving $\frac{3}{4}$ the education that boys are.

Good Things Happen When Mothers Work Together

It was here that FAWEMA identified an opportunity to both help young women stay in school while providing mothers with new economic opportunities. By offering product design within the space of mothers' groups, FAWEMA supported these women in their efforts to develop an affordable solution to this problem: a reusable, locally-sourced sanitary pad.

In addition women were also provided with training in areas such as product distribution and business planning so that they could be empowered to sell these products to other women in the community.

The Value of Women-led Solutions

Having access to comfortable and affordable sanitary pads resulted in significant improvements in girls' attendance and performance at school. Ensuring that girls receive a full education will help to ensure that more doors remain open as these young women carve out their future. These results were

possible because FAWEMA worked directly with mothers in the community- who are the experts on what needs to change for their girls to remain in school. This project is a great example of what becomes possible when women's voices in the community are heard.

Sharing Knowledge, Sharing Success

Thanks to generous donations from people like you, MATCH has partnered with FAWEMA to bring this project into more communities in Malawi. With our support, FAWEMA will be able to reach out to more mothers' groups and more young women.

To learn more about MATCH's current work with FAWEMA- and our other current projects- visit our website at www.matchinternational.org/LatestProjects.



Putting Money Where Our Mouth Is

Following conversations with a wide-range of partners from around the world last year, we are taking bold steps this fall to launch the MATCH International Women's Fund - the first of its kind in Canada. This is our commitment to increasing the resources available for women's rights internationally. It is how we ensure that we remain committed to our core values, mission and vision.

Look for these feature boxes throughout the newsletter for more information about the Fund and visit our website at www.matchinternational.org/TheFund.

Political Participation Project Unearths Women's Leadership: Report on Peru

By MATCH Board Member, Maxine Ifill



Maxine Ifill in Peru

Afro-Peruvian women face many barriers to ensuring their human rights are upheld. Five to ten percent of the Peruvian population are of African descent and the majority – 78 percent – live in poverty. Afro-Peruvians often face discrimination, racism and violence making it difficult for them to take steps towards improving their living conditions.

That's why, in 2011, MATCH partnered with CEDEMUNEP to increase Afro-Peruvian women's political agency in Peru by expanding their knowledge on the country's political process: More Afro-Peruvian women in politics means more national attention to the issues that matter most to them. Founded in 1997, CEDEMUNEP combats racism and discrimination against Afro-Peruvian women and promotes activism for women's

rights. MATCH has been a partner of CEDEMUNEP for over ten years.

In October of last year, while vacationing in Peru, I had the opportunity to meet with founder and Executive Director of CEDEMUNEP, Cecilia Ramírez Rivas. As a board member it was an enormously valuable experience. The gracious welcome and hospitality I received was both heart-warming and a testament to the MATCH method of engaging and working with partners.

Thirty-three Afro-Peruvian women were involved in the political participation project – working to strengthen capacities in political engagement, civic participation and leadership. As a result of this project, three Afro-Peruvian women were set to participate in the upcoming elections.

Smart Investing Can Change the World for Women

Now this is something to get excited about. For the last few years, socially responsible investment- financial investing with a social conscience and for the advancement of social good- has been on the rise. This fall, a group of Canadian women have put their financial minds together to launch Canada's first mutual fund that will promote the advancement of women globally.

The Global Women's Equity Fund will invest in publicly traded companies that have demonstrated support for women's rights and women's leadership. In order to make the cut, companies will need to meet a rigid set of criteria, including adherence to quotas for female leadership on Boards and in executive positions and an explicit commitment to the UN Women's Empowerment Principles. In addition, the GWEF will also be donating 1% of the overall profits to women's rights organizations around the world, including MATCH!

We love this because it's a new way to think about growing the pot of resources for funding the critical work women are doing around the world to improve conditions, get out of poverty and challenge inequality. In the age of financial austerity and budget cuts, we are thrilled that innovative thinking is happening to ensure that women don't fall through the cracks.

How can you help? Ask your financial advisor about this option and help build the buzz for this product. The more money invested, the louder the message. It's time to exercise our financial muscle.

To find out more visit www.globalwomenequityfund.com or email info@globalwomenequityfund.com.



Money, Voice and Change - Women's Funds Do It Better

Since we began thirty-seven years ago, MATCH has worked with over 650 grassroots women's rights organizations around the world as part of our feminist commitment to international development practice. These experiences have made us especially well-positioned to be Canada's first International Women's Fund. But why a women's fund? Money, voice and change.

Money



Women's Funds provide a more direct route from supporters to beneficiaries. That means more money goes directly to the women's organizations who need it most.

Voice



Funds will enable more ownership over projects by local women - leaving the projects in the hands of those who know best what is needed for changes to occur in their lives and in their communities.

Change



Women's funds are structured to address the underlying issues of gender inequality. They support projects that address root causes, having the most impact on creating sustainable social change.

Suzanne Johnson-Harvor: Leaving A Legacy for Women's Rights



Suzanne Johnson-Harvor with ED Jess Tomlin

We recently had the opportunity to visit with MATCH co-founder Suzanne Johnson-Harvor. Suzanne has always maintained a vision for MATCH as an organization that works in partnership alongside women's groups in the developing world, supporting their community leadership to bring about change for themselves and future

generations of women. Suzanne shared with us her excitement regarding the launch of the MATCH International Women's Fund, which she sees as being very much in line with the values and commitment that first brought MATCH to life.

We were very touched to learn that Suzanne has made the decision to name MATCH as a beneficiary in her estate planning, maintaining her legacy and commitment to the empowerment of women for years to come. In the words of Suzanne, "I am so thrilled to know that MATCH is following a development path that is going to be most rewarding for the women who benefit from the funding. I have always contended that Canadians have a role to play in supporting women bringing about amazing change in their communities. Including MATCH in my estate planning is one way to contribute to this."

The impact of legacy gifts is monumental. In the past year, MATCH was fortunate to receive a generous gift from another long-time donor who had named MATCH in their will. This gift has been instrumental in keeping the MATCH lights on and deepening our support for women working to make positive change in their communities. It is thanks to the generosity of this loyal donor that MATCH has been able to expand its programming into the Congo, providing resources to local midwives so that they can better support women who are victims of sexual violence.

Including MATCH in your estate planning or will can ensure a lasting commitment to putting money where it matters most - in the hands of women who are demanding a better world.

For more information on ways you can give, and include MATCH in your plans, please call 1-855-640-1872 or email Nuala at nnazarko@matchinternational.org.



A Focus on Grant-Making

The Fund will provide grants to local women's organizations in the developing world, providing them with an important source of funding.

We will launch a global call for proposals in the fall, paying special attention to particularly marginalized women, including young women. We will work with a global network of advisors of women innovators and community leaders from around the world to inform our granting decisions, monitor our progress and identify challenges and opportunities.



Some Things Won't Change

Through the Fund, MATCH will continue to support the organizations that we have always believed to have the greatest potential for achieving lasting change for women: grassroots organizations, organizations led by women and organizations that work to serve women and girls.

We've Been Busy: A Snapshot of the Past Six Months

MATCH Manitoba Fundraising Luncheon FEBRUARY 3	 FEBRUARY 14	International Women's Day E-Card Campaign MARCH 8	New project in Malawi MARCH 15	Rekindled our partnership with African Women's Development Fund MARCH 25	Mother's Day Manifesto MAY 7	 More women in power means more power for women. Get involved in local politics and share your voice through your vote.
FEBRUARY 14 Launch of the MATCH Blog Online	MARCH 8 Op-Ed by MATCH on the State of the World's Women	<i>"Where I am the most encouraged is the ever-growing momentum that is building among women and men at the grassroots level."</i>		MARCH 25 New Project in the Congo	APRIL 29 MATCH Manitoba's Annual General Meeting	MAY 30 MATCH's Annual General Meeting



Women's Social Innovations

For almost forty years your dedicated support has enabled us to work with women's organizations around the world; building networks, providing resources and support, teaching and learning from one another. But our years of experience have also made one thing very clear: around the world women's organizations are severely underfunded and rely heavily on unpaid work

Did you know?

- In 2011, only 10% of women's organizations around the world were able to access funding from UN Women, national governments and international non-governmental organizations.
- The average annual income of women's organizations around the world is just \$20,000 - that's a combined income of \$1.6 million USD going towards women's rights internationally.

In spite of this, we believe that true change – that which causes a shift in behaviour, beliefs, or policies - can only happen when women are integral to this process. That's why the MATCH International Women's Fund will make a concentrated effort to support women's innovations to address root causes of poverty and challenge inequality

Women innovate every day, often in the most difficult of contexts:

- In situations of tribal conflict, it is often the women who cross enemy lines to negotiate the terms of peace and reconciliation;
- Women are harnessing new technologies to map and draw attention to the issue of rape and harassment in the rise of religious fundamentalism in the developing world;
- In India, pink taxis are providing women with a safer way to travel around the city and new economic opportunities for female drivers.

Introducing the Newest Members of the MATCH Board of Directors



Joanna Kerr

Joanna Kerr is the Chief Executive of ActionAid International, a global federation with over 2800 staff working in over 45 countries committed to finding sustainable solutions to end poverty and injustice. She is based in ActionAid International's Headquarters in Johannesburg. She

was Policy Director at Oxfam Canada and was awarded a leadership prize for her significant role as Executive Director of the Association of Women's Rights in Development (AWID). She has been an advisor to numerous organisations including Women's Initiatives for Gender Justice, Mama Cash, the UN Trust Fund on Violence Against Women and The Stephen Lewis Foundation. In the nineties she was a Senior Researcher at the Ottawa based think-tank, The North-South Institute. Joanna Kerr holds an MA in Gender and Development from the Institute of Development Studies, University of Sussex, Brighton, UK. A Canadian, she has lived and worked in Africa, Latin America and Asia.



Lise Martin

Lise Martin is passionate about women's rights and equality. She has been active in the Canadian women's movement for over 20 years. She is currently the Executive Director of the Canadian Network of Women's Shelters and Transition Houses. Prior to this, she was the Executive Director of Women's

Worlds 2011, the largest international feminist gathering to have take place in Canada. Lise was the Executive Director of the Canadian Research Institute for the Advancement of Women (CRIAOW) for ten years. She is a founding member of the Canadian Feminist Alliance for International Action (FAFIA) and was the Canadian NGO coordinator in the lead up to the UN's Fourth World Conference on Women in Beijing. Lise's M.A. in Geography focused on the nature and location of women's economic activities in the informal sector in Ecuador.

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