We must change the world for women. Together, we’ve been saying it for nearly 40 years, yet the headlines are just as troubling as ever. In Afghanistan, women are imprisoned for running away from their violent husbands. In Nigeria, at least 2,000 women and girls have been tortured by Boko Haram. In China, young women are detained for standing up for women’s rights. So, this winter, The MATCH International Women’s Fund took a stand. Keep reading to see how we took to the streets with our disruptive action.
According to Article 198 of Kuwait’s Criminal Code, wearing pants might mean that you are imitating the appearance of a member of the opposite sex. You could be publicly humiliated and arrested.

Or maybe you’re wearing a skirt? Perhaps you didn’t know that the length of your skirt violates Uganda’s Anti-Pornography Act, signed into law last year. Anything above the knee can equal a fine of nearly $4,000 and/or up to 10 years in jail.

What would you do if someone stopped you on a busy street and ticketed you for such “crimes”? 

For three days in Toronto, men and women in SWAT vests did just that. The MATCH International Women’s Fund issued more than 7,000 violation tickets to women commuters for acts such as wearing pants, wearing makeup, or leaving the house without permission. It was disruptive action. And it was an opportunity for women (and men) to stop and reflect upon the freedoms we enjoy in Canada.

If you have worn pants this week (or if you know a woman who has), please continue to help The MATCH Fund spread the word about women’s rights violations around the world.

Stay tuned to see where we will be ticketing next.

SARAH IS NOT REAL. BUT EARLY FORCED MARRIAGE IS.

Every year, 15 million young girls are married to much older men. Told through the lens of a fictional 12-year-old girl, The MATCH Fund’s first crowdfunding campaign launched this March to highlight the issue of child marriage.

Surpassing its goal, the campaign was a success. Thank you to those of you who shared Sarah’s story and donated to the campaign.
MEET OUR NEAREST GRANTEEES

We are proud to announce our newest grantees who are Holding Ground and Breaking Ground for a better world.

BREAKING GROUND

Akili Dada (Kenya): Translated as “Brain Sister,” Akili Dada is a leadership and innovation hub for girls. Through their work, Akilia Dada nurtures both a sisterhood and a strategy for smart, relevant, and girl-led leadership in Kenya.

FEM Alliance (Uganda): Kidnapping. Torture. Assault. These are the possible consequences of loving a same sex partner in Uganda. FEMA creates safe spaces for LGBT individuals who face violence and discrimination due to their sexual orientation and gender identity.

Law and Advocacy for Women (Uganda): Sometimes having the law on your side isn’t enough. Despite anti-Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) laws in Uganda, FGM is on the rise. So LAW Uganda trains female paralegals to eradicate FGM at the community level.

Asociación de Mujeres Migrantes y Refugiadas (Argentina): Ensuring that Argentina’s migrant population has access to resources is a big job. But AMUMRA doesn’t just pitch in. They pitch a tent. The Human Rights Traveling Tent brings legal advice and professional counselling to migrant and refugee women in remote areas.

HOLDING GROUND

Corporación Vamos Mujer (Colombia): No vote, no voice! Confronting plummeting voter turnout rates, Corporación Vamos Mujer will help Colombian women cast their vote in the 2015 municipal elections.

Her Turn (Nepal): It takes a village to eradicate early forced marriage. And Her Turn’s Girl Support committees mobilize that village, equipping Nepalese girls with the knowledge to reject early forced marriage and to stay in school.

A grantee of The MATCH Fund since February 2014, The Asociación de Mujeres “Las Golondrinas” and their partners on the ground have moved mountains to ensure that sex workers have access to healthcare. Why? There are an estimated 14,000 sex workers living in Nicaragua, but sex work is an unregulated and underground industry. Due to stigma and discrimination, these women often do not seek healthcare and/or information to protect themselves against STIs or HIV/AIDS.

A small group of former Nicaraguan sex workers founded the Asociación de Mujeres “Las Golondrinas” to defend the human rights and safety of women in the industry. The MATCH Fund supports Las Golondrinas in their efforts to advocate for an executive decree from the Ministry of Health. Successfully passed this year, the decree now mandates healthcare providers to care for sex workers without discrimination.
DONOR SPOTLIGHT:
AN INTERVIEW WITH DIANA RIVINGTON

“I retired from the government; I didn’t retire from women’s rights.”

The MATCH Fund sat down with Diana Rivington, a long-time supporter who recently retired from the Canadian International Development Agency. But, as Diana puts it, “I retired from the government; I didn’t retire from women’s rights.” This is evident after just a few minutes with Diana who, today, is on the Advisory Council for The MATCH Fund, is involved with the Women, Peace & Security Network, and consults for the McLeod Group.

Our conversation focused on choice and agency. Gender equality policies tend to think of women as “patients, not agents,” Diana said. They are seen as “vessels for the next generation,” but “it is a fundamental right for women and girls to be able to choose not to have children or to choose the time and space in which they have children. The only choice available now is to have healthy children.” This is a pervasive issue—from Prince Edward Island, where women cannot access the abortions that are legally available to them, to Honduras, where women are jailed for having an abortion.

Women must be seen as agents in their own lives. “That is why I support The MATCH Fund,” explained Diana, “to support women who have already identified what they need to make a change in their society.” Diana, who began her career in front of an elementary classroom, has never stopped thinking of herself as a teacher. “My role is to help people find their own answers.”

HAPPY MOTHERS’ DAY FROM THE MATCH FUND

130 million babies are born every year. That’s 130 million mothers. If your own mother is one in a (130) million, consider donating to The MATCH Fund in her honour. Your gift ensures that women around the world are able to dismantle barriers, challenge perceptions, and change the world for women and girls.

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Leaving a Legacy Gift

[I have included The MATCH International Women’s fund in my will]
[I would like to receive information about making a planned gift]

Thank you for your generous support.