The Silence is Breaking.

There is an important conversation happening in Canada, about women and their bodies, about violence in the home, about harassment on the streets. The world is watching our conversation. Canadian women are sharing their stories of rape and assault on social media. Written in 140 characters or less, these messages are reverberating among women well beyond our borders. Canadian and international media alike have been filled with revelations about the experiences of women in this country. Activists are demanding action and bringing international attention to the over 1150 missing or murdered Indigenous women in Canada. In our offices and in our homes, Canadians are finding new opportunities to discuss hard topics like consent, harassment, and rape culture.

We are moved by this momentum. It reminds us of the power of women - here in Canada and around the world. Women who are demanding change for themselves, for their sisters, and for their daughters. Often doing so in the most complex and difficult of circumstances.

Women’s rights organizations continue to lead the way in finding creative ways to advance the conversation. Cell phones, movie cameras, and soccer balls have become their tools for change. New legal arguments, international commitments and political leadership are giving women the resources to advance women’s rights like never before.

This year, one year into our grant-making, we have listened to thousands of women working all over the world. We have much to learn from our grantee partners, who work tirelessly in their communities to challenge the status quo and improve women’s lives.

The MATCH Fund has invested in organizations who are changing the world for women. In the following pages of this newsletter, you will read about some of the innovative ways women’s rights organizations are pushing the pendulum further. Young women, artists, peace-keepers, and activists - all defining signature solutions for their unique and complex realities.

From Canada to Benin, Nicaragua to the Pacific, what we are hearing loud and clear is that women will not be silenced. So take a moment to listen to their stories and get ready to be inspired.
WMW JAMAICA

JAMAICA

A young girl growing up in Jamaica today cannot turn on her television, or read a magazine, without being flooded with tired stereotypes about women and men.

In fact, scenes of violence against women have become so pervasive in mainstream media that it has created a culture of tolerance toward violence off-screen as well.

The MATCH Fund supports WMW Jamaica to raise awareness about the link between how women are portrayed in media and violence against women in real life.

WMW Jamaica is teaching young women how to identify misogyny and sexism in mainstream media so that they no longer feel defined by the negative images that surround them.

STUDIOMOBILE: ACCENT ON ACTION

GEORGIA

Last year, a small group of lesbian, bisexual, and transgender (LBT) women gathered on the International Day Against Homophobia and Transphobia (IDAHOT) to rally for their rights. Within the hour, they were met by an angry crowd, answering their calls for greater acceptance with hatred and violence. This year, the LBT community did not come out to protest, but instead stayed inside, feeling more voiceless than ever.

StudioMobile - Accent on Action is refusing to let their stories go unheard. They are working with the LBT community in Georgia to create a film that documents their daily struggles living in a society that refuses to accept them. Through their documentary, they plan to engage Georgians in conversations about human rights and counter homophobic culture one screening at a time.

CANADIAN CORPORATIONS ARE GOOD CITIZENS, TOO.

“At Citizen Relations, we strive to embody three core values in all that we do: Do the Right Thing, Respect Everyone, and Strive for Excellence.”

The brilliant minds behind award-winning public relations agency, Citizen Relations, have been hard at work over the past year. With their expertise, they have helped us bring our work to new audiences in Canada through both traditional and innovative approaches, including opinion pieces, interviews, Twitter chats, and even boxing classes.

Inspired by the commitment of our Board Member and General Manager of Citizen, Nick Cowling, the team at Citizen - a diverse group that includes many leading women - quickly developed a deep connection to our work and to the women that we support. It is this connection that inspires them to continue spreading the word about The MATCH Fund and the work of our amazing grantee partners. We are grateful for their commitment to women’s rights and thank them for their tremendous support.
MEET OUR NEWEST BOARD MEMBERS.

We are pleased to introduce three new Board Members to The MATCH Fund. With our sights set on ambitious goals, we are growing our Board to build our national representation and gain the experience and skills we need to continue our critical work on the ground. We asked our new board members why they chose to support The MATCH Fund with both their time and talent:

**The MATCH Fund is the best investment opportunity in Canada, bar none, for improving the lives of women and girls globally.**

Marcia Cardamore
Director

**Women’s organizations are catalytic, and The MATCH Fund helps them to be strong and resilient.**

Linda Plumpton
Director

**I truly believe that big, sustainable and impactful changes start small with each and every one of us.**

Michelle Sharp
Director

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**FONDS POUR LES FEMMES CONGOLAISES**

**DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF CONGO**

When there is more equal representation in politics, the issues that matter most to women and girls are much more likely to be heard. But in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), less than ten per cent of parliamentarians are women.

Fonds pour les femmes Congolaises (FFC) is no longer allowing the transformative power of women’s voices go overlooked. They are preparing more women to run in the 2015 elections, by working with their networks to identify women who are interested in becoming more involved in politics and who have demonstrated leadership within their communities.

To increase their chances for success, FFC is also working with communities to empower them not only to vote for women, but to vote for the candidates who will be committed to advancing women’s rights once elected.

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**AKINA MAMA WA AFRIKA**

**UGANDA**

For many women around the world, peace and security means much more than the absence of war. Conflict leaves a lasting mark on women that persists long after the final cease-fire. Increases in gender-based violence, economic insecurity, and the number of women-headed households are all too common consequences of war.

Despite the many unique impacts of conflict on women, their exclusion from formal peace talks continues to be felt around the world. Over the last thirty years, women have made up less than 8% of formal peace negotiators.

Akina Mama wa Afrika is working the Great Lakes Region of Africa (Uganda, DRC, Burundi, Kenya, Tanzania, and Rwanda) to advocate for women to have a seat at the table as the best way to ensure women’s rights remain central to peace negotiations in the region.
GEORGINA COSTUROS - A LEGACY OF COMPASSION.

“We hope that Georgina’s life has a powerful impact and that her values and spirit will live on through the children and women she has supported.” - Carla, Wanda & Aureene Costuros

Upon Georgina’s passing, Carla, Wanda and Aureene, were given the difficult task of creating a legacy that would honour their sister. Guided by Georgina’s compassion and heart, they sought organizations that shared her commitment to fighting injustice around the world. Carla, a long-time supporter of The MATCH Fund, along with Wanda and Aureene, agreed that Georgina would have believed in our work to create transformative change for women.

Today, Georgina’s passion for a better world lives on through the Costuros family’s gift to The MATCH Fund. This gift has played an integral role in our grant-making and is helping to improve the lives of women and girls around the world.

To learn more about Legacy Giving, please contact Julia Ehrhardt at jehrhardt@matchinternational.org or 1 855 640 1872.

RAPE CRISIS CAPE TOWN TRUST
SOUTH AFRICA

When a young woman is subjected to violence in South Africa, there are not many places she can turn to for support. Shamed into silence, she often carries this burden alone.

But she is not alone. Her peers, fed up with the perception that rape is an issue that only concerns adults, are engaging in conversations about gender, sexuality, and violence.

With the support of Rape Crisis Cape Town Trust (RCCTT), young women are being provided with the resources to push these conversations even further. These brave and outspoken girls are convening their peers in classrooms, on street corners, and in the community to challenge cultural perceptions about violence.

RCCTT, the oldest rape crisis centre in the country, is leading the way in shaping a new understanding of human rights and equality for future generations of South Africans.

Y-FEM: THE YOUNG FEMINIST MOVEMENT
NAMIBIA

Florence is not afraid to speak up for her rights as a young woman in Namibia. But when joining important conversations about gender and equality, she cannot help but notice the absence of other young voices. That’s why in 2009 she formed Y-Fem to nurture greater feminist leadership amongst her peers. Her organization is reaching out to communities to educate young women about their rights and mobilize them to speak out against injustice.

In a country where a lack of information has contributed to high rates of teenage pregnancies and maternal mortality, one of Y-Fem’s core activities is educating young women about their sexual and reproductive health and rights. Y-Fem has a particular focus on lesbian women who are at greater risk of sexual violence in Namibia because of their sexual orientation.