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provides the power



New opportunities
Why women should
consider the trades

**MEDIA
PLANET**

March 2012

INVESTING IN WOMEN & GIRLS



SETTING THE STANDARD

Canadian women are making their mark in the age of participation
for a more equitable, inclusive and sustainable world for all

PHOTO: CARE

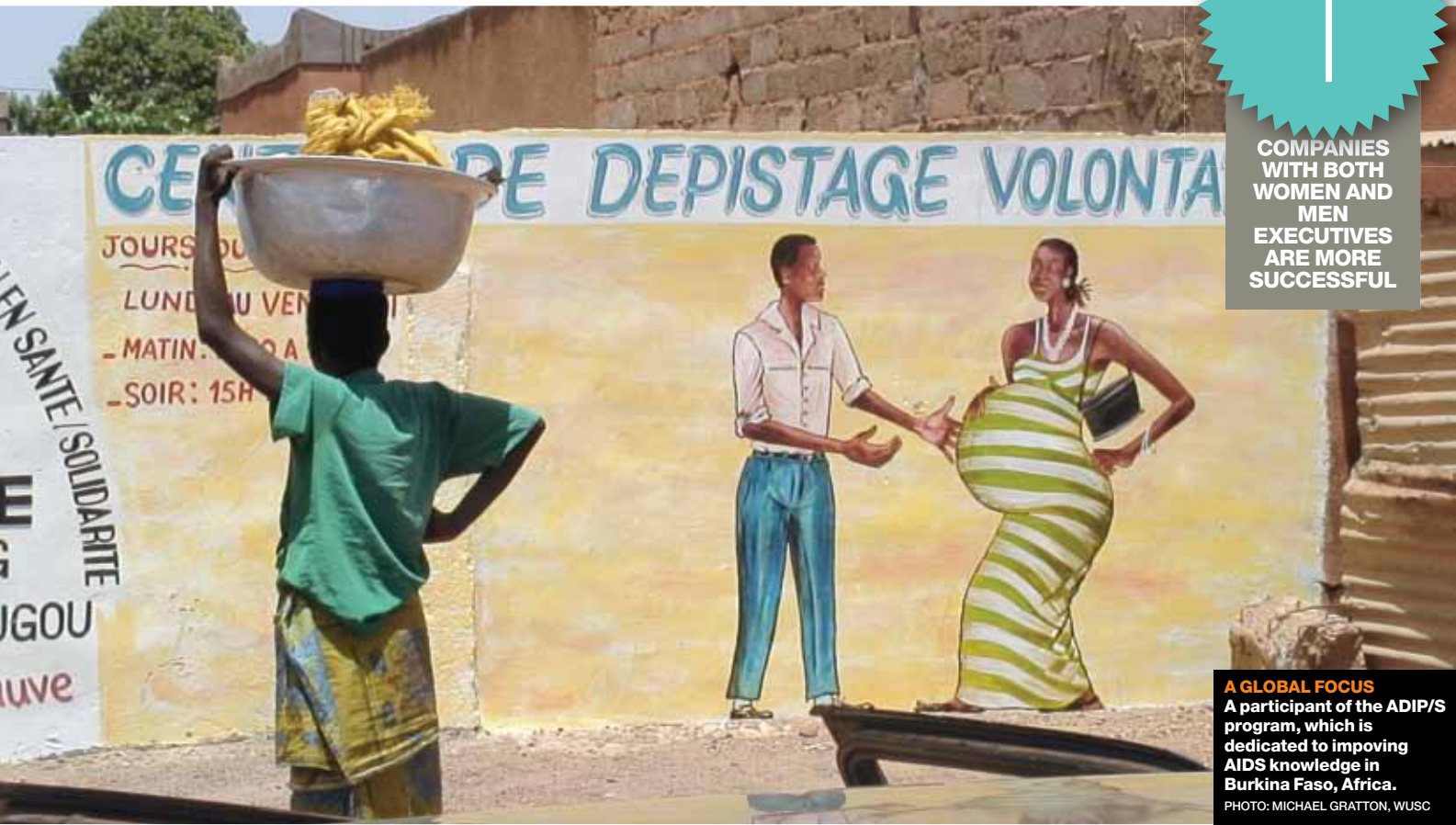
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CHALLENGES



FACTS

1

COMPANIES WITH BOTH WOMEN AND MEN EXECUTIVES ARE MORE SUCCESSFUL

A GLOBAL FOCUS
A participant of the ADIP/S program, which is dedicated to improving AIDS knowledge in Burkina Faso, Africa.
PHOTO: MICHAEL GRATTON, WUSC

WE RECOMMEND

The power to fight
How WUSC initiatives are bringing AIDS awareness to the poorest countries.
PAGE 6

“These two organizations provide education and training to improve livelihoods, balance inequities and promote health.”

Repairing the soul **p. 5**
How treating fistula damage goes beyond fixing the body.

Seek empowerment **p. 6**
What you can do to make a difference in your own community.

CHECK OUT FACEBOOK.COM/MEDIAPLANETCA FOR OUR EXCLUSIVE ON “CONFRONTING THE GLASS CEILING.”

On March 8th, **this year’s International Women’s Day Canada addresses both great challenges and promising opportunities** for engaging women and girls for a better world at home and globally.

An intelligent investment in a better world

Women and girls in Canada certainly have a lot to celebrate. Today, we enjoy opportunities our mothers and grandmothers could only dream about. In almost every aspect of our lives—family, career, education—we are free to make our own choices. We have taken on leadership in business, politics and community life. Our impact has been profound. In the last decade, a new consensus has emerged: the world’s problems will never be solved unless women help to shape the solutions. This is true internationally, and it’s true right here in Canada. And there is new respect for the “feminine” strengths of collaboration, listening and emotional intelligence. Our influence is also being felt in the philanthropic world. Women have always been more engaged

in volunteering and more likely to make a charitable donation. Now, we are beginning to use our new financial power to support other women. We don’t want band-aid solutions; we want to address the root causes of problems.

Finding the strength within

We know what it’s like to be hobbled by a chronic lack of confidence—no matter how qualified we actually are; to have our energy drained by an unhealthy focus on our appearance; to deal with sexism in the workplace; and to try and rebuild our lives after experiencing sexual assault or physical abuse. We also know that helping others, helps us to heal. And our help is desperately needed. Despite our progress as a group, thousands of women and girls in Canada have been left behind, trapped by violence, poverty and rigid stereotypes that limit their potential.

Beverley Wybrow
Executive Director,
Canadian Women’s Foundation.

MY BEST TIPS

- **Think positive:**
Support programs that leverage women’s strengths, rather than focusing on their “weaknesses.”
- **Take a holistic approach:**
Look for organizations that tackle economic and social problems from multiple angles.”
- **Join a movement:**
Find others who share your values.
- Visit www.canadianwomen.org

Violence against women costs Canadians \$4.2 billion a year in health care, social services, criminal justice, lost wages and loss of productivity. One in seven women in Canada is poor. And despite all our advances, over half of all girls in Canada say they wish they were someone else—a stunning indication of their lack of self-esteem.

The good news?

Women have always had a passion to make a difference. Now, we have the capacity to make it happen. Since 1991, the Canadian Women’s Foundation has helped thousands of women and girls in Canada to move out of violence, out of poverty and into confidence. Our work is an intelligent investment in a better world, creating a ripple effect that leads to safer families, stronger communities, and a more prosperous society for all. We invite you to join us, and to invest in the power of women and the dreams of girls.

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INVESTING IN WOMEN & GIRLS
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Celebrating rights by facing today’s challenges

In the past 20 years, over 100 countries have written new, or revised, Constitutions to include equality rights for women.

This year is the 30th anniversary of our Charter of Rights and Freedoms. Women the world over have always taken an active role in the pursuit of democracy. And it is then that the struggle for women’s equality must intensify. Research has shown over and over that investing in girls and women is the number one way to achieve democracy, peace and development. We have just seen three women peacemakers win the Nobel Peace Prize. Women have helped to achieve peace, end conflict and em-

power women in their countries, and where there is an increase in women’s empowerment there is a decline in violence and conflict. In this past year we have witnessed the Arab Spring and the inspirational uprising of women participating equally in seeking justice, freedom, and equality. And we witness the harassment and violence perpetrated against the same women who were marching in Tahrir Square, while women were eliminated from the Egyptian constitutional process. Just as women in the Arab regions will continue with the struggle, so too do Canadian women. Over 40 years ago in Canada the Royal Commission on the Status of Women tabled a massive report on critical issues affecting Canadian women, with over 150 recommendations. Women’s activism on these issues galvanized the unprecedented mobilization of Canadian women to ensure that our equality rights were entrenched in the Charter. Yet half of these recommendations have



STUDENTS OF CHANGE
Left to right: Ashley Heaslip, Jennifer Bond, Laurel Sherret, Susan Bazilli, Lindsay Dalton, Marilou McPhedran—the founder of the IWRP and currently the Principal of the Global College of the University of Winnipeg, and Sofi Kajwa. All women are former IWRP students.

not been met. In 2012 the Canadian government is being investigated by the United Nations for discrimination against native women and its shocking inaction on the cases of the Missing and Murdered Aboriginal Women. The Canadian Government is a signatory to the CEDAW Convention (Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women). Never has its non-compliance been more egregious.

Instead of reducing international development aid and slashing funding to Canadian equality seeking organizations, Canada needs to celebrate International Women’s Day and our Charter of Rights and Freedoms with a vigorous stance on equality. Canada needs to move forward, not backward.

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Susan Bazilli
Director,
International
Women’s Rights
Project

EVENT LISTING

Shelter from the Storm

■ From April 14 to May 13, the Canadian Women’s Foundation, Winners, HomeSense, Rogers and individuals across Canada will join together to raise money to help stop violence against women. Shelter from the Storm is the only national campaign that raises money to support community programs across the country. Programs that help women rebuild their lives after abuse; that teach young people about healthy relationships; and that counsel children who have witnessed violence. Shelter from the Storm also supports over 450 shelters for abused women and their children across Canada. You can help by visiting your local Winners and HomeSense and purchasing limited edition products or by making a donation online at www.shelter-fromthestorm.ca You can also register to participate in the 2nd Annual Empower Hour, a one hour group based workout lead by GoodLife Fitness that challenges you in support of women and children facing the toughest challenge of their life.

INITIATIVES



EMPOWERING CHANGE
Bazilli (third from right), insists that investment in women's initiatives is the only way to establish democracy.

PHOTO: IWRP

EMPOWERING WOMEN THROUGH BUSINESS AND TECHNOLOGY

Create a network

■ Building relationships is an important part of professional and personal success. Reach out to other female professionals to expand your career opportunities and enlarge your networking talents

■ Pursue an environment where performance is celebrated regardless of gender.

(Pamela Jeffery, *Women's Executive Network*)

Strive for excellence

■ Companies with both women and men leaders in the boardroom and at the executive table are poised to achieve sustainable big

wins for the company and society.

(*Catalyst Research*)

Pursue career advancement

■ Fifty two percent of highly qualified females working for science, engineering and technology companies will quit their jobs within the first 10 years due to lack of mentors, career advancement and sponsors.

(*Canadian Women In Technology*)

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He already has more rights than she does.

When allowed the right to an education, and the opportunity to use it, women in the developing world can give birth to far more than the next generation. They can give birth to new ideas. New businesses. New sources of income. And lasting change that improves conditions for everyone. Now is the time for action. She has the power to change her world. You have the power to help her do it. Visit us at

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Defending dignity.
Fighting poverty.



HELPING TO MAKE LIVES BETTER, TOGETHER

Winners and HomeSense want to thank you for helping to make a difference to the lives of women and girls who live in violent and poverty-stricken situations within our communities.

Our support of the Canadian Women's Foundation has helped 450 shelters and reached more than 30,000 women and girls nationwide.

HOMESENSE®

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INSPIRATION

Question: What does television personality Kim D'Eon believe is necessary for any woman to find empowerment?

Answer: Confidence in knowing that you deserve success—and that you make a difference.

Measuring the effects of motivation



LEADER TO LEADER

Although Kim D'Eon is famously known across the country as an award-winning reporter on Entertainment Tonight Canada, what makes her uniquely special is her off-screen philanthropic conquest to advance women and girls.

January of this year marked her admission into CARE Canada as an Ambassador of Change. Alongside CARE, an organization devoted to defending dignity and fighting poverty, D'Eon has embarked on a mission to improve the lives of the less fortunate by using her public platform to raise awareness about CARE's initiatives and various fundraisers held around the world. "These are issues that

sembly of girls about her journey towards empowerment and confidence.

Beauty comes in all forms

"You can change someone's life by telling them that they're wonderful," D'Eon states proudly. The media often bombards females with unhealthy standards of beauty, but with initiatives such as "What are your measurements?," women and girls everywhere can redefine their sense of self to avoid social brainwashing. This campaign is brilliant because it sheds light on a woman's contributions to society and her life-long accomplishments. The concept is simple, think of three numbers based on milestones you have achieved, either socially or politically, that make you feel empowered. "It's obvious women are misrepresented in the media, but this initiative causes people to reflect and rethink the pressures to look a certain way. It's about changing the way women are judged and valued," says D'Eon.

Change lives one step at a time

Across the globe in developing countries, women and girls face greater challenges such as lack of education, healthcare and financial independence. D'Eon is a spokesperson for CARE's signature campaign "Walk in her shoes," which enlists people to get involved by walking 8,000 steps per day for eight days in celebration of international Women's Day to show solidarity to women who are forced to walk at least six km a day to get basic necessities like water and firewood. "Empowering women benefits both genders and the world because if they receive an education, they will spread it amongst their families and influence generations to come," D'Eon declares.



COMMUNITY IMPACT
"Walk In Her Shoes" is a fundraising initiative to provide aid for women forced to walk at least six km a day for necessities.
PHOTO: CARE

I've felt passionate about since I was a child. I knew right away this new role was the perfect fit," says D'Eon. A whirlwind of opportunities have resulted from this partnership such as a recent visit to Elmwood School in Ottawa, where she spoke to an as-

The community can show their support by either physically participating and raising funds or donating money to D'Eon, who will be actively involved., if they don't have the time to walk themselves.

Either way, it's about spreading the message so that females everywhere have an opportunity to live their best lives. "When you feel confident, you make better decisions in all areas of your

life and this, by far, is my proudest moment," affirms D'Eon.

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After losing her baby,
Zita didn't think life
could get worse...

Her difficult labour
left her incontinent

- shunned and
abandoned.

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Women in Nuclear
CANADA

www.wincanada.org

Women in Nuclear-Canada and Skills Canada-Ontario supporting women working in the skilled trades and technologies.

To view *Women Working in the Skilled Trades and Technologies – Myths and Realities* visit
www.skillsontario.com/womenintradestrademythsandrealities

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ENHANCES
PRODUCTIVITY,
IMPROVES
DEVELOPMENT
OUTCOMES FOR
THE NEXT
GENERATION

INSPIRATION



1-2: Alex Carroni of Harley-Davidson Canada says the company has a strong focus on women riders.
3. A model shows off the latest in the company's apparel line.
PHOTO:HARLEY-DAVIDSON CANADA



SEIZE THE CONFIDENCE

Question: What is the secret to building confidence and self-esteem?
Answer: Taking risks and seeking adventure.

Nothing mounts the feeling of freedom on the open road while the wind plays in your hair.

Deeley Harley-Davidson® Canada exemplifies an adventurous lifestyle branded towards what women want. The motor company has provided a platform where new riders can explore the industry without feeling subdued by their male counterparts. Currently leading as the strongest manufacturer and marketing strategist in terms of branding towards women, persistence has prevailed in the amount of 13 percent female consumer represen-

tation. “There has always been interest from women to actively ride motorcycles, but historically there hasn’t been a lot of information tailored to their needs which has been our primary focus over the past decade,” says Alex Carroni, public relations specialist of Deeley Harley-Davidson® Canada.

Live the life you want
Women-focused events, such as “Garage Party”, has established itself as a trademark as well as an opportunity to step outside a comfort zone with confidence and a sense of empowerment. Female instructors provide insight, particularly to those who don’t have their license, and offer a source of inspiration and networking opportunities among like-minded people. “We’re all balancing out busy lives that entail personal and profession-

al ambitions. Motorcycling is a good way to give you some quality time to free your mind and renew your energy,” suggests Carroni, who commutes to work on a motorcycle and gains inspiration from riding.

Anything is possible
Living a dream is familiar grounds for Lia Grimanis, who, once homeless, is now a successful businesswoman, an avid rider and founder of a volunteer adventure group called the Muff Scouts. “I’m an adventurer. I’ve driven a Russian army battle tank, joust-



ed in full armour and learned to fly a helicopter. I created the Muff Scouts to help women live their own adventures as well,” says Grimanis. In less than a year the group has exploded beyond its 320 members in Canada and has impacted San Francisco and London, England as well. Dirt biking, trapeze and archery are among the favourite activities, but aside from sports, what also motivates these women is the encouragement from their companions and the fulfillment after overcoming an obstacle. “Conquering fears translates into the rest of your life and helps you realize, you’re stronger than you think you are,” affirms Grimanis.

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Repairing the mind, body and soul

According to the United Nations Population Fund, two million women suffer from fistula in developing countries.

Though this disability weakens their confidence and self-esteem, access to community programs can restore their lives and dignity. In parts of Africa, Uganda and Ethiopia, it’s common for a maternal woman as young as 15 to experience chronic leaking of urine and feces—a disability otherwise known as obstetric fistula. It takes place when a rupture in the vagina, bladder and rectum occurs as the result of pressure from an infant’s head during prolonged obstructed labour. Ed Epp, executive director of Christian Blind Mission (cbm), a non-profit organization focused on helping people with disabilities in the poorest countries of the world, says while a cure is available, it’s out of reach for many women. “It’s not life threatening and can be fixed with surgery, but a lot of times these women don’t get to a hospital due to lack of income. They tend to put their limited income into things that are life and death, like food,” he says. Often, the baby is born dead from stress and long delivery which is coupled with abandonment by the family and community because of the foul odor. But with financial aid from cbm, ex-



“(Women) tend to put their limited income into things that are life or death, like food.”

penses for transportation and surgery are accessible.

The redefining moment
Without treatment these women become destitute, depressed and endure physical ailments such as infections, anemia and chronic illness. “Poverty will never be addressed if we don’t empower women. Access to income is vital for improving the family, education and the health-care system,” Epps states. To create change in economic developments, cbm spreads awareness about fistula by educating communities so that women understand the import-



STRENGTH IN SISTERHOOD
Maria (far right), a fistula patient who received aid from cbm, finds support from other beneficiaries.
PHOTO: CBM

ance of medical attention during birth. Thanks to generous donors, cbm Canada provided over 800 life-transforming fistula operations last year and through support groups, more women can begin repairing the emotional damage which will have long term effects. These results are a beautiful indication that progress is being made, however, Canadian women are encouraged to put themselves in the shoes of women in the developing world. Imagine a life without basic necessities

followed by unwanted guilt and lack of love and support from friends or family. Even after a successful surgery, the memories surrounding this disability will always remain in their minds, but community organizations can provide an outlet where women can uplift and motivate themselves and each other, and look forward to a thriving future.

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NEWS IN BRIEF



Left: Cheryl Cottrill, Executive Director, WIN Canada;
Right: Gail Smyth, Executive Director, Skills Canada-Ontario

NEWS

A new perspective on opportunity



A visit to any Canadian construction site proves there is a shortage of skilled female workers on the job. Typically, less than three percent of all apprentices in construction, automotive and industry trades are women. Considering the average age of a skilled tradesperson is 55, the short supply of skilled workers will become more urgent, as 40 percent of the workforce is expected to retire in the next 10 years.

Taking a new perspective

This situation requires industry as a whole to think differently about whom it can attract, and this shift should provide an abundance of opportunities for women who are considering careers in skilled trades and technology. Women now make up one half of the workforce, and in order to fill the human resource crunch caused by increased retirements, educators, government and industry must work together to encourage more female workers to look at the skilled trades and technologies as a first-choice career option.

Getting the real story

There are many myths around women working in skilled trades. Skills Canada-Ontario and Women in Nuclear-Canada addressed many of the misconceptions held by students, parents, educators and industry and offered recommendations for positive change in their collaborative paper, Women Working in the Skilled Trades and Technologies—Myths and Realities. (www.skillsontario.com/womenintrades-mythsandrealities) Careers in the skilled trades or technical fields offer well-paying jobs, while providing an opportunity to “earn while you learn” through apprenticeships and offering outstanding opportunities for advancement. While there is certainly a physical component to most trades, technology has changed the nature of how work gets done. Work in the skilled trades today increasingly uses computer software and sophisticated mechanical equipment, so the reality is that skilled trades require workers with less brawn and more of a strong academic foundation in reading, writing, math and sciences, along with dexterity, stamina and good hand-eye coordination—all qualities women possess equally with men.

The skilled trades cannot afford to underutilize or overlook any segment of the talent pool. Our society’s infrastructure depends on a skilled workforce. Women have an important role to play in keeping Canada strong! For more information visit www.wincanada.org and www.skillsontario.com.

THE GLOBAL SPOTLIGHT

Offering a fighting chance

■ **Question:** How can women in poverty remain hopeful that a beautiful future lies ahead?

■ **Answer:** By maximizing resources and tools provided by Canadian volunteers.

Women are the face of HIV and AIDS in many parts of the world and since healthcare is considered a luxury, this disease has created widespread poverty.

World University Service of Canada (WUSC), through the Uniterra volunteer cooperation program jointly managed with the Centre for International Studies and Cooperation (CECI), works tirelessly to inspire change. WUSC provides education and training to improve livelihoods, balance inequities and promote health.

These initiatives are progressive, and with the dedication and commitment from volunteers, tackling economic challenges and gender equality can become more possible. Thus far 2,300 Canadian men and women have volunteered internationally. In result, 470,000 people in developing countries have improved their living conditions. But the problem still remains and more help is needed. According to UNAIDS, 34 million people are living with HIV, of which approximately 22.5 million live in Sub-Saharan Africa. Half of the people infected are women.



FACING CHALLENGES
Women from Burkina Faso make strides thanks to WUSC funding.
PHOTO: FANNIE GOUAULT, WUSC

Turning frustration into motivation

Access to healthcare, medication and testing for HIV and AIDS is limited and without the tools to combat this pandemic, women are at high risk of facing many challenges. "In most cases, infected women are rejected by their husband and family," states Fatimata Lankoande, WUSC country director in Burkina Faso. Destitution effects economic self-sufficiency, education, and health, but through a microloan pro-

vided by affiliated organizations such as l'Association Solidarite Entraide Mutuelle au Sahel (SEMUS), a promising future lies ahead. SEMUS aids entrepreneurship groups to train and help women create their own business. One of which is Sanata Compaore, an HIV-positive, 40-year-old widow, who is now the only caregiver for her family. Through this program she was awarded 50 000 francs, equivalent to one hundred Canadian dollars, and has since more than doubled it by

providing services such as selling condiments, beans and carrying wood on her bike. Currently, she is able to afford treatment and take care of her family. Support from Canadian volunteers makes a significant difference and success stories, like Sanata's illustrate how a little goes a long way.

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DON'T MISS!

Seek empowerment within your community

Invest in your future

- Investments into health and education shape women and push them to maximize their potential and live more productive lives.
- Greater gender equality can enhance productivity, improve development outcomes for the next generation, and make institutions more representative.
- A recent study shows that 2,000 women in 19 countries depend on a combination of factors to feel empowered such as: communication with community and financial independence. (World Bank)

Strive for success

- Seek out a mentor in your field. They have the opportunity to pass on invaluable information, lend support and provide encouragement to build confidence, self-esteem and explore options.
- Empowering women globally to take on leadership positions is essential in providing new perspective and encouraging balance. (Women in Leadership Foundation)

Dream big

- In countries such as Ethiopia, Eritrea, Guinea and Niger, there are fewer than 35 female tertiary students for every 100 male students.
- Women are just as likely as men to graduate in the fields of Science and Social sciences, business, education and law. (UNESCO)

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Volunteers help change women's lives



Uniterra Volunteer: Sarah Lowden

I worked with SEMUS, an organization fighting against poverty and HIV and AIDS in Burkina Faso.

The face of AIDS is mainly a woman's face:

- In developing countries, women with HIV and AIDS face stigma and marginalization. Infected women can be blamed for bringing HIV into the family and be rejected by loved ones.
- Women often struggle to make ends meet and to provide for their families. HIV-positive women face the additional challenge of finding ways to pay for the medications they need.
- Worldwide 34 million people are infected by HIV and AIDS, half of them are women.

Solutions exist

Local communities, non-governmental organizations, and women's groups are coming together to offer health-care services targeted to women and to facilitate women's access to employment. Together, they make a real difference.

Canadian volunteers with the Uniterra program contribute significantly to these initiatives.

"I used my annual leave from MD Physician Services to become a Uniterra volunteer and worked as a Budgetary Consultant with a local organization in Burkina Faso. I wanted to make a positive change in the lives of others. The fight against HIV and AIDS is one that I hold very close to my heart and I have seen firsthand that it is one worth battling—life expectancy and quality of life can be changed with medical support. Having the opportunity to transfer my skills to the front line workers who dedicate their lives to making a difference in the quality of life of those who have been effected by HIV and AIDS has been a very rewarding and life changing experience for me."

You too can take action.
Become a Uniterra volunteer!

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www.uniterra.ca