

Voices for CHANGE



>>> DONOR NEWSLETTER >>> FALL 2018 >>> OXFAM.CA >>>

IN THIS ISSUE >>> Creating Spaces for Change...Page 2

>>> Rubina: Hope for Her Daughter...Page 3 >>> Surviving Drought...Page 4

>>> Rowena's Corner...Page 4 >>> Rohingya Refugee Crisis...Page 5

>>> Meet Gloria...Page 5 >>> Nepal Update...Page 6 >>> Speaking Tour Info...Page 6

Message from Julie

Each and every day, donors like you change lives.

The faces you'll see and the stories you'll read bear joyful witness to the true difference you have made in people's lives and communities around the world.

For all you've done... *Thank you.*

You fund projects that amplify silenced voices – like Creating Spaces, our multi-country effort to stop violence against women and girls, including child, early and forced marriage.

But one of the most unique things about Oxfam supporters is that you also help us speak truth to power. Because of your unfailing support, we can do that fearlessly, and we do.

That is why, earlier this year, we spoke up loudly at the G7 summit in Charlevoix, calling for bold political action on inequality, decent work and livelihoods, and an end to violence against women and children.

Together, we're also launching a campaign this fall which calls on governments and the international community to protect people affected by conflict and disaster. Especially women and girls who are forced to flee for their lives.

You let us speak up and speak out against inequality



Photo credit: Oxfam

and gripping poverty, and the forces that create them. You help us call for global change.

In the pages of this newsletter, you will read more about the people your gifts support. And the efforts we are taking – on your behalf – to change their lives and the world we share.

This is so important. By reaching your hands out in compassion, you are also helping raise our voices for long-term, lasting change. It is this combination of advocacy and on-the-ground action that will build a fairer world.

Thank you.

Julie Delahanty

Thank you for your continued support of Oxfam Canada's work.

Creating Spaces for Change

Your compassionate support is creating safe spaces – and a brighter future – for women and girls in six countries: India, Pakistan, Nepal, Philippines, Bangladesh and Indonesia.

Oxfam's Creating Spaces project helps women and girls access **support**, find **justice** and create **change**. In its second year, the program has already delivered more than 1,500 workshops and educational programs designed to prevent violence against women and girls (VAWG) and end the practice of child, early or forced marriage (CEFM).

Through Creating Spaces, you're empowering girls like Rubina – whose heartbreaking, yet hopeful, story you can read on the next page.

Over the past two years, you've given 524 local community groups the tools to address incidences of violence and child marriage. You've supported 159 women and girls as they learn ways to generate their own income. Plus, you made 101 mentorship linkages between trained women and girls. You also furthered 110 advocacy initiatives and 185 campaigns aimed at implementing laws and policies to address VAWG and CEFM.

In addition, plans are underway in Bangladesh to launch a pilot interactive voice response (IVR) system for women and girls in target villages. The system will provide a hotline number for people to call and learn about their nearest support services. If they want, they can get the information texted to them.

Together we are making a difference! Thank you for helping to create safe spaces and a positive future for women and girls around the world!

Rubina with her brother and mother.

Photo Credit: Abir Abdullah/Oxfam Canada





Photo Credit: Abir Abdullah/Oxfam Canada

Rubina and her daughter Jim.

Rubina: Hope for Her Daughter

“You can’t change the past, but you can change the future.”

– Rubina, age 18

Rubina has been through a lot in her 18 years of life. In fact, still not much more than a child herself, she’s already been married for five years and has a 3-year old daughter, Jim.

“I was married when I was 13 years old and forced to quit school. I loved going to school to learn and see all my friends. But once I was married it was over, I had to stay at home.”

But thanks to the community groups Rubina, her brother and mother attend – supported by you

through Oxfam’s Creating Spaces program – they realize they have the power to stop the tradition of child marriage and give young girls hope for the future.

Rubina’s mom, Lovely, says, “I feel really bad about marrying my daughter as a child. I wish I hadn’t. But I did not know. It was just the way that things were. But it ends now. No more child marriage. Now I know that mothers need to stand up for their daughters.”

Rubina’s brother, Faridul, is a wonderful example of how important it is to involve young men in the process of challenging oppressive traditions. He says, “I was only a child when my sister was forced to marry. I was too young and powerless to stop her marriage. I just stood by and watched it happen. I have promised my sister and myself that I will not stand by and let any child marriages happen.”

Rubina’s husband has even started attending one of the community groups, which is helping him become a better parent.

Now armed with confidence, Rubina says “It will be different for my daughter Jim. I will do everything I can to make sure that she stays in school and gets an education.”

Rubina is part of the Oxfam Creating Spaces program.



Photo Credit: Abir Abdullah/Oxfam Canada



Photo Credit: Kieran Doherty / Oxfam



Photo Credit: Anne Toralles Leite/Oxfam

Hassana with some of her home grown produce.

Surviving Drought: Hassana's New Way of Life

Thank you for providing essential support for people struggling to survive the catastrophic effects of climate change.

Hassana lives in the Somali Region of Ethiopia and knows the incredible challenges of the pastoralist life, constantly moving from place to place trying to find enough food and water for the animals during times of drought.

A widow, with five children, Hassana says, "During the rainy season we would earn a good income and during the droughts we would have a hard time. The worst was five years ago. The drought killed a lot of livestock."

Now, with support from Oxfam Canada, Hassana considers herself a farmer.

"We learned how to plant seeds and set up irrigation channels. Now we have planted grass to feed our animals. I'm growing tomatoes and onions too. We have harvested a lot.

"Without support, we would be waiting for the rain, but with this support we have a well, we can get water anytime and we have a lot of crops."

Your gifts help pastoralists like Hassana to diversify their livelihoods so their families consistently have enough food and water. Thank you so much for your compassionate support!

Rowena's Corner - David Salter – a legacy of fighting injustice and poverty

David became involved in the social justice movement as a teenager. His motivation? Seeing so many people living in poverty in the small town where he grew up.

David has worked for close to 20 years as part of Oxfam's International Programs team.

"Oxfam to me is the hope that individuals from every corner of the world can bring about lasting and positive change."

Inspired by hope, David made the very generous decision to leave a gift to Oxfam Canada in his Will.

"It's important to me to provide what I can to support work that I believe in once I'm gone.

"It's so inspiring and humbling to come into contact with people who, even in the hardest of circumstances, love and care for one another, have hope and work to improve their lives. Seeing this makes it impossible to commit to anything less."

For more information on leaving a gift in your own Will, please contact Rowena at rowena.griffiths@oxfam.org or +1-613-627-8634



Photo: Maruf Hasan/Oxfam

Rajiah in front of her home.

Rohingya Refugee Crisis: Women helping Women

You're giving women the strength to come together and support each other in some of the worst circumstances imaginable. Close to 1 million Rohingya people have fled violence in Myanmar to seek refuge in Bangladesh. The vast majority of people are currently living in refugee camps.

One of these women, Rajiah, 46, fled six months ago with her 15-year-old daughter. Although her husband disappeared when the violence broke out in Myanmar, Rajiah hasn't given up hope. She's become quite the

leader in her community, taking it upon herself to support and educate pregnant women in the camps.

With a good education and vast experience delivering more than 10,000 babies during her work as a midwife back in Myanmar, Rajiah is leading the process of forming women's groups in the refugee camps over the coming months.

Rajiah is outspoken and confident, a full believer in women's roles outside the household. Her name means "hope" – a true reflection of her personality and life's work. She's working to further help her community – especially the women. Your generosity will support Rajiah throughout this process.

You'll also help Oxfam ensure that hundreds of thousands of displaced people have access to water, sanitation and safer living conditions. We're drilling wells and installing water points, toilets and showers. Plus, volunteers are distributing soap and other essentials as well as educating refugees on the importance of clean water and good hygiene.

So far you've already helped Oxfam reach at least 185,000 people living in the Bangladesh refugee camps. With your continued support we hope to reach more than 250,000 people over the next few months.

Meet Gloria, one of Oxfam's Humanitarian Superwomen

It can be particularly challenging as a young woman leading men in many African societies. As a native Tanzanian and Swahili speaker, Gloria is up to the task.

"My first ambition was to become a doctor, but I instead became a water and sanitation engineer. I design and supervise the construction of water supply systems to ensure that people don't get sick from sanitary issues. I am also a leading advocate for women's rights in my community.

It feels great to show your own people that it's possible to make a real difference."

What advice would Gloria give to other young women wanting to work for Oxfam?

"It starts with getting good grades. It's important to work hard and deliver your best. You should also try and find support or guidance from women in the NGO sector. It's important we support each other as women."



Gloria, proudly working with Oxfam.



Photo: Abbie Trayler-Smith / Oxfam AUS

Durga teaches others how to weave.



Photo: Abbie Trayler-Smith / Oxfam AUS

Durga's sister.

Nepal Update: Empowering Durga

An inspiration to those around her, Durga has created a thriving business for herself, and a source of income for nine other women in her community.

Six years ago, Durga received training from the ACP, the Association for Craft Producers in Nepal, which provides support and training to local artisans. Durga learned intricate weaving skills – and then decided to train her sisters and other female relatives to work with her.

“I feel proud that I am able to provide employment to those who didn't have work. Rather than looking for farm labour work, we can work together and be together. We can share our ups and downs of life and also work.”

After the Nepal earthquake, Durga's shop was destroyed. With your support of Oxfam Canada's work in Nepal, Durga received help to rebuild her shop as well as her family's home.

Durga's gratitude is immense: “Because of them, we have been able to have two meals a day. Without work, we won't be able to feed ourselves, and now we have work.”

The happiest day of Durga's life so far? The day she recently received an award for the quality and reliability of the weaving she and her sisters produce!

Thank you for empowering women like Durga to pursue work that gives purpose and meaning to their lives – and the lives of those around them.

Durga proudly weaving beautiful cloth.



Photo: Abbie Trayler-Smith / Oxfam AUS

Join us!

RSVP today! Oxfam's Speaking Tour may be in a city near you this November. Check Oxfam.ca for more information.