

LEGACY LEADERS

The true meaning
of life is to plant
trees under whose
shade you do not
expect to sit.

- Nelson Henderson



GROWING SAVINGS ... AND HOPE

Your support made it possible

Atongiwunima Abapana has big plans for the future. She's giving her children a better life with the help of her growing savings fund. ***And it's all possible because of you - thank you!***

Atongiwunima is a basket weaver and farmer from Bolgatanga in northeast Ghana. She used to struggle to put good food on the table for her six children. Sometimes they missed school because there just wasn't enough money for supplies.

That all changed thanks to your support. Atongiwunima joined a basket weaving group and learned new designs. She also learned how to market her baskets successfully. **But it was the Village Savings and Loans Association (VSLA) - supported by you and other caring Canadians - that truly changed her life.**

Atongiwunima, like so many other women, had no way to borrow money or save for the future before joining the VSLA. *"It was difficult for me to keep up,"* she says. *"Now, I spend money on my family's needs and save the rest."*

Atongiwunima and other women in her community put a little money into the shared savings box each week, then they take turns to get a share of the total. They can also take out small loans.

(continues inside)

Planting a legacy

It is my pleasure to welcome you to our very first Legacy Leaders newsletter. We wanted to write something special for you, our most loyal donors, to give you an exclusive insight into the work you are supporting now and the foundation you are building for the future.

You can expect to see stories from the people who work directly in communities around the world, families whose lives have been changed, children who are thriving, and so much more.

And we would love to hear from you: give us your questions, comments and suggestions for stories you would like to hear more about!

Don't hesitate to reach out to me directly. In the meantime, I hope you enjoy these stories and THANK YOU for being a CFTC Legacy Leader.



A blue ink signature of Michelle Vinokurov.

Michelle Vinokurov, CFRE
Your Legacy Leader Advisor

GROWING SAVINGS ... AND HOPE (cont'd)

Atongiunima can now buy enough straw and dyes to weave baskets. She weaves *four times as many baskets as she used to*, and now earns more per basket. Her children go to school with everything they need. They eat well. And an emergency loan helped her sick child get critical medical care. *"I was able to buy medicine so one of my children could get surgery at the Bolgatanga Hospital,"* she told us.

Atongiunima plans to grow more food on her farm and start selling *kenkey* (sourdough bread) to earn more money. Her main goal is to feed her children well, send them to school, and make sure they are healthy. Her eyes shine with pride when she considers the legacy she is leaving for her family.

Your support has changed Atongiunima's life - THANK YOU!



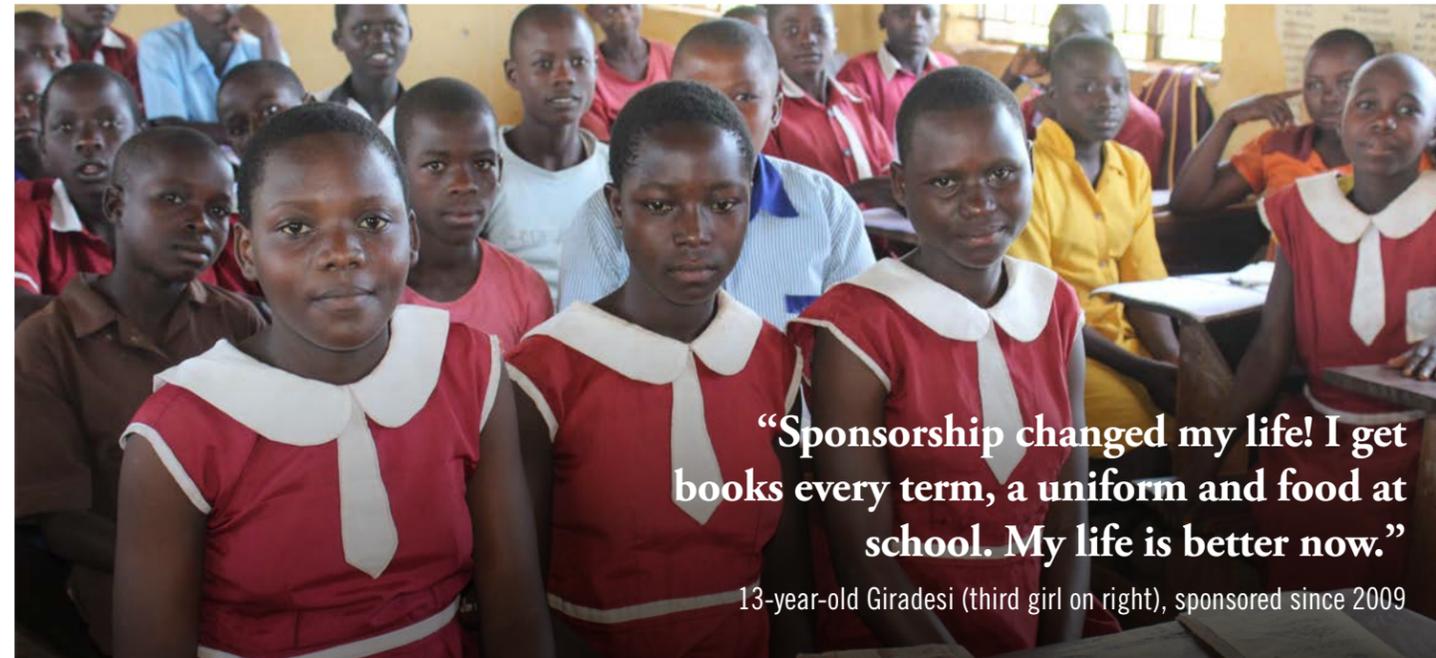
Atongiunima, right, sells some kenkey to a customer. It's a new business venture made possible by your support.

"I do not think about the odds in the future, because I know I have some savings to rely on."

Atongiunima Abapana - mother, farmer and successful VSLA member

SPONSORSHIP CHANGES LIVES NOW AND FOR THE FUTURE

Giradesi is happy and healthy thanks to her child sponsors



"Sponsorship changed my life! I get books every term, a uniform and food at school. My life is better now."

13-year-old Giradesi (third girl on right), sponsored since 2009

Giradesi is 13 years old. She lives with her grandmother in Uganda and loves going to school. She has been sponsored since 2009 (she's going in to her tenth year of sponsorship). Susan Skelton and Dave McCagherty have been with her every step of the way (read their story at right).

Giradesi has a dream to some day give back to her community: *"I would like to be a nurse. I want to treat sick people."* She knows that to become a nurse, she has to go to university.

That's why she's so grateful to her child sponsors for giving her the chance to go to school.

When Giradesi was very small, both her parents passed away. She and her siblings went to live with their

grandmother Kagoya. Despite her own health problems, Kagoya worked hard to provide for the children. Still, it was hard for her to afford uniforms and books on her small farming income. Sponsorship helped changed Giradesi's life - and Kagoya's too.

Giradesi has grown into a happy, healthy and strong girl. She can't wait to start secondary school and work towards her dream.

Life could have been very different. Without sponsorship, Kagoya says that Giradesi would not be in school.

Giradesi has a special message for her sponsors in Canada: *"Thank you for supporting me all these years. May God bless you for what you have given me!"*

GIRADESI THEN AND NOW

Giradesi is growing up happy, confident and ready to achieve her dream of becoming a nurse. See how she's blossomed over the years, thanks to the support of her sponsors in Canada.

2009



2012



2017



"It makes your life more worthwhile"

For Susan and Dave, sponsorship and legacy giving is a meaningful way to give back

Dave McCagherty and Susan Skelton are life-long donors to causes supporting children. From an early age, Dave understood the value of giving back. Growing up without a father wasn't easy but through a volunteer organization he was paired with a caring mentor who provided invaluable guidance and lifelong friendship.



His wife, Susan Skelton, remembers a lesson she learned at the dinner table as a little girl. When she didn't want to eat, her parents reminded her that there were other children who had no food at all. She understood then that she was lucky and she wanted to help others who weren't so lucky.

Both Dave and Susan began helping others at a very young age. Dave did skate-a-thons for charity, and Susan planned food drives. So it was only natural that giving back became part of their family life once they got married.

One night at a dinner party with friends, they heard about Canadian Feed The Children. They loved the idea of helping a child get an education. They were also impressed by how much of their funds would go to building up communities.

And so they decided to sponsor a very special little girl. It turned out to be Giradesi.

Watching Giradesi grow over the years has been special. As Susan put it, *"it makes your life more worthwhile."* Every year during the holidays, they line up her photos in a row to see how healthy and strong she has become. Check some of them out at left!

Recently, Susan and Dave decided to extend their commitment to children and families into the future. That's why they became CFTC Legacy Leaders. Leaving a gift in their will is their way to make the world a better place for children like Giradesi for generations to come.

CONNECTIONS ACROSS GENERATIONS HELP CHILDREN THRIVE

As a Legacy Leader, you know the importance of leaving a lasting impact on the next generation. The same is true for grandparents and Elders in the communities you support around the world.

Elders and grandparents are critical links between generations. They pass on vital knowledge that builds community resilience and child and youth well-being. They teach traditional farming techniques, good health practices, and much more. Involving them in community development increases their confidence and builds community respect for Elder women. It also ensures the transfer of knowledge from one generation to the next.

Your support of Indigenous communities in Canada has enabled knowledge sharing and helped rebuild traditional connections to the land and culture. It helps youth have pride in their Indigenous identity and teaches practical skills that can restore hope and heal communities.

THANK YOU! Your gift is a priceless way to provide hope and help for generations to come.



In Neyaashiiniimiing First Nation, Indigenous artist Boshdayosgaykwe passes on traditional beading and quillwork techniques to younger generations, preserving culture and instilling pride in their identity. Photo: © Allan Lissner / OCIC



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Reflections from the field

Yeshitila Alemu, CFTC Program Manager, Ethiopia

I grew up in rural eastern Ethiopia. Community development and poverty eradication is my passion and my life's calling. It is gratifying to watch people use CFTC donor support to achieve their dreams.

I'd like to share the story of Etalemaw Kebede, who lives in the Kirkos sub-city of Addis Ababa. Etalemaw lived with her husband Mengesha and two sons, Habtamu and Natnael. Her husband was the only breadwinner but suddenly left and stopped supporting the family. Etalemaw heard that he started a new life with another woman.



Etalemaw Kebede and her youngest son, Natnael

After her husband left, she learned that she had HIV. She remembers that time as *"the darkest time in my life; I used to cry every day. Imagine a mother who has nothing to give her hungry child. It was very difficult."*

She described enrolling in the CFTC program *"as if being pulled out of a deep pit. I knew nothing about business or how to generate income before. I attended business training [which] changed my whole life."*

Etalemaw bred and sold sheep, and used the profits to establish a retail cosmetic business. *"Now I am earning 2,500 to 3,500 birr per month. I am providing nutritious food for my children and sending Natnael to private school. Before, he was among the bottom three students in his class; now, he is one of the best three,"* she said.

"The dark times have now passed and I am planning to expand my business."

– Etalemaw Kebede, mother and businesswoman

Four years ago Etalemaw was a broken woman. Now she has healed and regained confidence. She asked me to pass along a message to CFTC's donors: *"thank you for opening my eyes; I have a bright future now."*



Yeshitila Alemu has a B.Sc. and M.Sc. in agricultural and development studies. He has worked in international development for 16 years, joining CFTC in 2012.