

The Global Villagers returns to Vision TV

The Global Villagers is a 26 half-hour TV series telling the stories of Canadians working in partnership with the world's developing communities.

TORONTO — “Every night our members are assailed with the bad news of war, famine, HIV/AIDS,” says Carol Phillips, Director of the Canadian Auto Workers (CAW) Social Justice Fund in an interview for *The Global Villagers* TV series. “What the fund does is offer them a vehicle to engage in some of those solutions and that’s why, one cent, per hour, per worker, they support it.”

Phillips is explaining why and how her membership of over 260,000 auto, hospitality and transportation workers has joined up with Canadian non governmental organization (NGO) Canadian Physicians for Aid and Relief (CPAR) to help communities besieged by HIV/AIDS in the African country of Malawi.

The story of the CAW in Malawi is the story of *The Global Villagers*, says Executive Producer Dawn Deme – one that is told dozens of times throughout the 26-part series. It is the story of how ordinary Canadians gain as much as they give when they devote their lives to helping the world’s developing communities.

"The decision to help others you might never meet – living, as they do, thousands of miles away in unimaginably different circumstances – is the decision to go on a richly spiritual and educational journey," says Deme. "In this series, you learn about other cultures, you will hear about magnificent leaders emerging out of village communities to bring innovation and hope to their people. Perhaps most importantly, you start to get ideas about how to bring about something better within your own communities and neighbourhoods in Canada."

After nearly four years of, “exhausting and amazing experiences in over 20 countries,” says Steven Deme, the series Director, “we are thrilled to bring this celebration of Canada's special global citizens and their partners overseas to the Canadian TV audience.”

Toronto-based Villagers Media Productions, founded by the Demes, produced the series in association with Vision TV and with the support of the Canadian International Development Agency.

“We believe there will be tremendous interest. Each episode focuses on the work of one Canadian non-governmental organization and its overseas partners to promote change in the developing world. Each of these NGOs is supported by thousands and sometimes millions of Canadian donors. These are the people for whom we made the series,” says Steven Deme.

“Through the series, they will encounter the real people, both Canadian and overseas, whose work they have been supporting and they will see this work in the framework of the NGO community as a whole. They will share with us, as producers of the series, the privilege of meeting some incredibly dedicated people, of seeing firsthand the beauty and struggle of the communities with whom they work.”
The Global Villagers features visually stunning footage as it focuses on the field work of Canadian NGOs:

Adventist Development and Relief Agency Canada, the Aga Khan Foundation Canada, the Baha’is of Canada, Canadian Catholic Organization for Development and Peace, Canadian Council for International Cooperation, Canadian Feed the Children, Canadian Physicians for Aid and Relief, Christian Reformed World Relief Committee, CUSO, the Federation of

Canadian Municipalities, International Development and Relief Foundation, Inter Pares, Opportunity International, Oxfam, the Redemptorists of Canada, Salvation Army Canada, Scarboro Missions, South Asia Partnership, and World Vision.

“Each episode tells how these faith groups and aid organizations contribute to the promotion of peace and the meeting of basic needs in today’s underdeveloped nations,” says Dawn Deme. “Together they constitute the front line of Canada’s international compassion and generosity.”

We meet Mohammad Tahseen a Pakistani peace and democracy activist; Drs. Junice Melgar and Sylvia Estrada, feminist health care activists who are training women to fight for health care rights in the slum areas of the Philippines and Paul Mutangwa who returns to Rwanda in 1994 to help rebuild his country after the genocide. Haiti’s Gachette Madson, a young agronomist, mobilizes a new generation of problem-solving community leaders. We meet Martha Espinoza Osorio, a Nicaraguan woman who with a small loan starts a business and puts her four children through university. We watch Fr. Joe Maier as he battles against injustice in Bangkok’s slums, while Canadian Karen Clarke works in Northern Ghana to improve the lives of rural women and we meet Jose "Pepe" Wilfredo Sanchez Porras, who at 16 has become an advocate for Peru’s child workers. With each episode, we get to know the Canadians who have offered vital support throughout.

About Villagers Media Productions: *For over 15 years, Villagers has produced television documentaries that celebrate the human spirit with emphasis on the world’s diverse, compassionate and creative innovators. To date the company’s productions have been broadcast on Canadian Learning Television (CLT), ichannel, Vision TV, Aboriginal Peoples Television Network (APTN), BC’s Knowledge Network, Saskatchewan Communications Network (SCN), Alberta Access and W The Women’s Network.*