

THE CATEGORY

NGO

THE WOMAN

ROSEMARY MCCARNEY

President and CEO, Plan Canada

THE CHAMPION + STORYTELLER

BARRY FISHER

Principal and CIO, Avokka LLP

AS TOLD TO KATE DALEY
PORTRAIT OF ROSEMARY BY KOUROSH KESHIRI

I met Rosemary when I was in my second year of law school at the University of Western Ontario and she was in her first year. I was giving a speech and when I speak in a tiered room I tend to focus on one person and it happened that Rosemary was the person I focused on. This year we celebrated our 35th wedding anniversary. I like to joke that unless you want a long-term relationship, don't make eye contact.

Rosemary got her interest in development when her sister was working at the United Nations Centre in Nairobi, Kenya, and Rosemary took their father to visit her there. When they came back, a friend suggested that she meet up with a man named Donald Simpson, one of the founders of Crossroads International. The two went for lunch and when she came back she said, "I'm quitting law and joining in a partnership with this man I just met." For the next 10 years she worked in 60 countries

"She's a big thinker and she wants to move big agendas."

doing international development work with the World Bank and the Canadian International Development Agency.

Rosemary comes from a large family—they, and her three children, are very important to her. When she saw other children in dire straits in so many circumstances around the world, it motivated her not just as someone who can provide economic support, but also as



THE FACTS

- ▶ Responsible for 245 employees; 4 direct senior reports
- ▶ Holds 3 degrees, including an MBA and LLB
- ▶ Responsible for over 5,000 projects in 50 developing communities
- ▶ 7 fundraising campaigns in 2014 raised more than \$166 million

WHAT SETS HER APART

- ▶ Under her leadership, Plan Canada's revenue has grown 141%—from \$69 million in fiscal 2006 to \$166.4 million in fiscal 2013
- ▶ Fiscal 2014 is expected to close around \$199 million with contracts signed over \$350 million

WHERE SHE SCORED THE HIGHEST

- ▶ Total dollars raised from campaigns

someone who can use their legal expertise to advocate for children's rights. She wants to take everything she does to another level, so when they were looking for someone to run Plan Canada she jumped at the opportunity.

Canada is making its mark internationally in part because of Rosemary and people like her. She helped start the International Day of the Girl at the United Nations and the Because I Am A Girl campaign, and played a role in getting Canada to sponsor issues around forced marriages.

When the G8 was held here [2010], the level of contact that she had with the Prime Minister's Office made me realize that she was a player on a larger scale than just running the national office of an international charity. Maternal Newborn and Child Health was largely her agenda, so she and other similarly minded individuals convinced the Government of Canada and other G8 members to commit billions of dollars to the G8 Muskoka Initiative in 2010, and she did it again recently with Canada's further commitment of billions of dollars to saving women and their children's lives.

Don't underestimate her. She's not the kind of person who will spend a lot of time on people who are interested in minutiae. She's a big thinker and she wants to move big agendas. If you're prepared to help her move those agendas, then you'll be on the same page. ☺