



Guatemala Laundromat Project



Left: Ribbon -cutting ceremony for the Lavanderia Planeta Unido (01/11/08)

Supported by the Timberland Corporation and volunteers, United Planet has built a Laundromat at the women's shelter in Xela, the second largest city in Guatemala. Currently, the shelter, serving both battered women and children, is having a very difficult time making ends meet to provide a basic healthy diet and education for the women and children. The Laundromat, "Lavanderia Planeta Unido", serves as a way to provide the shelter with ongoing program revenue and a means to empower the battered women with the training to develop self-reliance and independence.

In Guatemala, violence within the home is commonplace. It is a patriarchal culture, where alcohol, poverty and a lack of government intervention exist. Battered women who wish to regain complete control of their lives have to overcome numerous difficulties where economic dependence is possibly the greatest limitation.

Running and managing the Laundromat will empower the women to assume responsibility and ownership of the operation as well as help them to develop the technical skills and experience to set up their own small businesses in the future.

United Planet is seeking both volunteers and financial support for this essential project.

2. Volunteer Opportunities with "Lavanderia Planeta Unido":

United Planet is currently searching for volunteers to assist with the implementation of the business plan, including the budget and marketing plan of the project. Work also includes training the women and shelter staff on operations and planning. Volunteers who can teach basic Spanish and basic English reading and writing are essential. No specific professional requirements are necessary. Basic to intermediate Spanish is an asset.

Financial support: If you would like to make a donation to support this special Micro-empowerment Laundromat project, please call us toll-free at 800-292-2316, 617-267-7763, or [click here](#). We appreciate your generosity.

Right: Grand opening of the Lavanderia Planeta Unido (01/11/08)



Timberland Advances Micro-Empowerment Program to Aid Battered Women in Guatemala

"The greatest danger to our future is apathy." -Jane Goodall



The [Timberland Clothing Company](#) has awarded United Planet a grant to help fund UP's Special Project to launch a Laundromat in Quetzaltenango, Guatemala. Timberland's empathy towards this distant city will truly impact the lives of people in need. The Laundromat will be located at one of UP's Quest destinations, Nuevos Horizontes, a refuge for women to come with their children to escape their abusive husbands. The need of Nuevos Horizontes is crucial in this highly patriarchal society plagued by alcohol, poverty, and lack of government intervention, where domestic abuse is accepted as a norm of life. It is an oasis for women who have no other place to go. The shelter, however, has been struggling to provide for the increasing numbers who arrive there. Unfortunately, many women have to return to their homes because they are financially dependent on their husbands.

The Laundromat will serve as a way for the women to earn a living. Providing them with economic autonomy, the women will learn they can increase their independence with the right means. Furthermore, running and managing the Laundromat will empower the women to assume responsibility and ownership of the operation as well as help them to develop the technical skills and experiences to set up their own small businesses in the future. This independence will inspire confidence in these women and give them the will to move on with their lives.

Timberland is a global leader in the design, engineering and marketing of premium-quality footwear, apparel and accessories for consumers who value the outdoors and their time in it. Timberland's dedication to making quality products is matched by the company's commitment to "doing well and doing good" -- forging powerful partnerships among employees, consumers and service partners to transform the communities in which they live and work.

With the resources provided by the grant from Timberland, United Planet can help the common good by supporting a community in desperate need. Dave Santulli, founder of United Planet, is thankful for Timberland's commitment to enhancing social and economic prosperity among cultures and giving the organization the opportunity to make a difference. He says, "For most of the women at the shelter where we volunteer, independence and freedom is only a distant thought. Now we can turn that dream into a reality so that they can leave the shelter and live a life of their own making."