

Shortly after graduation from medical school, Dr Chua volunteered for a medical mission to Niger. The experience changed her life. Since then she's volunteered for charity medical missions to Africa, Indonesia, and Ladakh, visiting areas with few or no medical facilities. "On our last trip to Ladakh, we saw more than 1,500 patients in five days!" says Dr Chua, a nominee in *The Weekly's Great Women Of Our Time 2011*.

"We give patients facts on preventive medicine they can use for the rest of their lives. And we train local medical staff to continue our efforts."

She also performs badly-needed surgery on women. "In Zambia, I saw a woman who had lost three babies in pregnancy. Her uterus had been removed due to a rupture, and she had an untreated fistula."

A fistula is usually due to giving birth without medical help. Over days and days of hard labour, the baby's head pushes against the mother's pelvic

bone – creating a rip between the birth passage and an internal organ. A woman with a fistula cannot hold her urine, and sometimes bowel content.

If she survives, she is often rejected by her husband due to her foul smell and because she cannot bear children. She may become homeless and live in constant pain, poverty and humiliation.

Explains Dr Chua, "This woman's fistula meant she was not able to store urine in her bladder. Her urine would just drip out at all times. So I performed the surgery to seal the fistula... the joy on her face, just having this basic human ability restored. Well, it was beyond words."

Since then Dr Chua has been invited to Sichuan and Madagascar to perform similar surgery on women. "We are trying to make these trips happen, because there are many women just like her, who still need help."

*\*Watch the team's documentary, Ladakh Medical Expedition 2011, on YouTube. For more on the team's efforts visit [www.global-clinic.org/Home.html](http://www.global-clinic.org/Home.html).*

“Millions of women do not have even the most basic healthcare”

**Dr Chua Yang, 43**, Director for A Clinic For Women, Specialist Obstetrician & Gynaecologist



“I wanted to pay it forward – beyond Singapore shores”

**Trina Liang-Lin, 40**, President of UN Women Singapore and Managing Director of Templebridge Investments



For two years, until 2007, Trina, now 40, was President of the Financial Women's Association, which raises funds for organisations like Minds, Unifem, and Assisi Hospice. "I've been comfortable materially working in the financial industry, and wanted to give back to society," she shares.

Then in 2009, she joined UN Women Singapore as President. Previously known as Unifem, UN Women Singapore works towards women's empowerment and equality in developing countries.

Last year, to mark the 100th anniversary of International Women's Day, Trina co-created Project Inspire, an annual joint initiative with MasterCard, where international teams submit pitches to empower disadvantaged women. The 2011 grand winner was a project to help women micro-entrepreneurs in the Philippines. Says Trina, "We had 450 entries last year. This year's Project Inspire starts on International Women's Day, on March 8, 2012." **W**

*\*You can also be a volunteer or donate at [www.unwomen-nc.org.sg](http://www.unwomen-nc.org.sg). For more on Project Inspire in 2012, go to [www.5minutestochangetheworld.org](http://www.5minutestochangetheworld.org).*