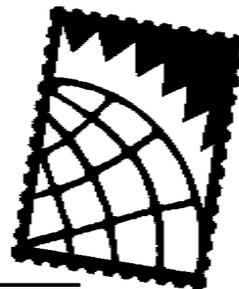


# Earthbeat



SCIC NEWSLETTER SASKATCHEWAN COUNCIL FOR INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION

Summer 2011

## Working for the Greater Good

By Lisa Faye

January 25, 2011 I stood in Saskatoon airport considering my options. I was sure at least one of my friends would offer me a couch to crash on until I got myself back together. I could get an apartment, look for a job, search out a daycare, start all over – but at least I'd have the community that I had become so attached to in my two years there. I honestly couldn't imagine why I ever decided to do this. And as Laila tugged at my trusty airplane cardigan and tried to convince me that she should be allowed to eat at least one more cheese croissant from Tim Horton's, I swallowed that big lump in my throat and got back in the Tim Horton's queue. Really, it will be two years before she gets another one of those – why not. That was the day

I left my beloved Saskatoon community and the culture I know and am comfortable in to do a two year volunteer placement through CUSO-VSO. I am travelling with my wonderful, flexible and patient 3 year old daughter Laila – although I knew she had no idea what was in store when she asked me why I forgot to pack her snowsuit. I will be working in a field office of Jagorani Chakra Foundation, in South West Bangladesh. There, my colleague Habib Rahman and I will work together to build the organizing capacity of 10 rural youth clubs. Really, we work as cheerleaders – encouraging the youth to be leaders and to demand the change they need to help their communities thrive.

And we are off.

We go to dusty villages in the most remote areas of Bangladesh to meet with the clubs. We listen to the issues they are facing in their communities



*Lisa shares her thoughts with Bangladeshi men while doing her community development work.*

and how they think they could create change. They tell us what kind of training they want and need – English language, computer skills, poultry rearing, tailoring. They tell us about the water rising in the Bay of Bengal (this is the reality of climate change my friends!) and together we research salt tolerant plant varieties and we are looking into building water harvesting systems.

It is all so immediate. It is right in front of me and the work needs to have been done yesterday. The women I talk to don't have enough clean water to bathe their children. Their shrimp are dying due to a virus that is caused by water pollution. The young people in these villages have gone away to school, but can't find work. They grow food in every spare piece of soil they can find, but as the soil becomes more and more salinated (again, climate change!) they

aren't sure what they can grow anymore. Even if they had a cow it would have nothing to eat or drink. Like I said, the problems are immediate, they are overwhelming and yet Habib and I head out again every day. The youth clubs are super excited to work with us to create change. We are doing our research and we are making a plan.

And that is my work for now. It's really good work and I'm happy to be doing it. I'm comfortable with where I am and what I'm doing. My goals in life are to be useful for the greater good and to dance a lot. This job definitely fits the first criteria. Now I just need to work more dancing into this job.

*Lisa previously worked for Oxfam in Saskatoon, and was involved with several local groups like Transition Saskatoon, the Saskatoon Food Coalition and more!*



## Earthbeat

is a publication of the Saskatchewan Council for International Cooperation. SCIC is a coalition of organizations involved in international development and committed to the recognition of the dignity of all people and their right to self-determination, to the protection of the world's fragile environment, and to the promotion of global understanding, cooperation, peace and justice.

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We welcome readers' comments and contributions, including donations to help cover production and distribution costs. Put your pen to paper, or your fingers to the keyboard, and send your contributions to: SCIC Newsletter, 2138 McIntyre Street, Regina, SK. S4P 2R7



For more information on the work of SCIC and its Member Agencies, please check out our Web site: [www.earthbeat.sk.ca](http://www.earthbeat.sk.ca) or e-mail: [scic@earthbeat.sk.ca](mailto:scic@earthbeat.sk.ca) or call 306-757-4669.

Payment of Earthbeat subscriptions (\$10) and Friends of SCIC donations are welcome anytime!

# SCIC REPORT



*Journalist Gwynne Dyer answers questions at his public lecture, which was part of Apathy Into Action.*

Over the last few months SCIC has been go-go-going! In case you weren't there or somehow forgot here are some stories about what we have been up to.

March madness isn't just for basketball enthusiasts, it applies to SCIC too! There were conferences, speakers, workshops, film festivals and more. The WorldBeat Global Education Project travelled to 3 teachers conventions in different corners of Saskatchewan, did workshops in several schools, and spent a week with author Debra Ellis on her tour around the province. For 31 days in March WorldBeat got a ton of teachers and students thinking about global justice and talking about what they can do to make the world a better place.

March 8 was International Women's Day. This year was the 100th Anniversary of the day. SCIC partnered with several other groups to hold a day-long conference in Regina. There were many other events held all over this province to talk about the struggles of women locally and across the globe.

Later that week – from March 10-12 – SCIC worked with the Regina Public Interest Research Group to host Apathy Into Action, a 2.5 day conference at the University of Regina. To kick off that event journalist and political analyst Gwynne Dyer spoke to a crowd of 250 people. The following day saw 6 mini-sessions on social justice topics, like slow food, bottled water, poverty and others. On Saturday 2 full day sessions were held for about 35 people. One session was on

Anti-Oppression Training and the other was on Conflict Transformation. The whole thing wrapped up with discussion and live music at the German Club. Connected to this, the same facilitator who led Conflict Transformation travelled up to Saskatoon to do the training with a group of young people there through the Next Up program.

The month wrapped up with a SCIC member capacity building event in Saskatoon. Michael Stephens, former Capacity Building Program Officer at the Canadian Council for International Cooperation (CCIC) in Ottawa, visited the province to lead a full day workshop to look at effective Public Engagement principles. This included looking at the current context and how change happens, sharing practices and imagining new ones, exploring evaluation methods and practical tools.

In March, and early April Saskatchewan saw 3 Environmental Film Festivals take place in Regina, Saskatoon and Swift Current. SCIC, the Saskatchewan Eco Network, and many other groups worked together to put these on. In both Saskatoon and Regina Environmental Activist Awards were handed out as well. This year's winners were, Allyson Brady, Michael Finley and Robert Regnier in Saskatoon, and Lyle Benko, Trevor Herriott, and Glen Sutter in Regina.

During his acceptance remarks Lyle Benko read this quote by Senegalese poet named Baba Dioum: "In the end we conserve what we love. We only love what we understand. We will understand only what we are taught." These words are powerful for those who try engage people around issues like the environment, global poverty, gender equality, and others. SCIC certainly agrees with Baba Dioum, which is why for the next 3 years we will be focusing a majority of our Public Engagement work within schools. Teaching about the developing world, poverty and vulnerability, the environment and climate change, and justice and equality will become our concentration. We are so pleased that the Canadian International Development Agency has agreed to fund us in this work, as we set out to educate Saskatchewan people, and end global poverty.



*Enthusiastic WUSC volunteer answering questions at Apathy Into Action.*

# KALEIDOSCOPE

## Winners announced!

YOUTH want to make the world a better place, and they have lots of ideas of how to do it. Nearly 60 young people aged 8 to 18 from Regina, Saskatoon and Melville created videos about global issues our world is facing, and how to solve them. Each one of those videos was entered into the national Kaleidoscope Video Challenge. On May 17 the Saskatchewan winners in elementary and high school age categories were announced. The awards were presented at Luther College High School during a school wide assembly that was also attended by students from other schools and community members.

The winning video in the high school age category was entitled "Change the World" and was created by four grade 9 students from Luther College High School. In their video they discussed the problems of climate change and pollution, and shared ideas to help reduce our impact, like recycling, driving less, and saving energy in your home. The winners of the elementary school category were

six students in a grade 7/8 class from École Massey in Regina. In their video "One Loan" the students tell a story about a small loan given that changed the life of a young boy and his community. Through creating the video the students learned a lot about micro-financing and a few of them ended up giving a loan through the organization Kiva ([www.kiva.org](http://www.kiva.org)).

The youth that made the two winning videos won a trip to Ottawa to take part in a national screening of their video and a leadership conference with other Kaleidoscope winners from across Canada. "This video contest afforded the opportunity for my students to express and explore deeply how youth can raise awareness about global issues and citizenship. The life lessons that they have learned are like seeds that will continue to germinate for years to come. The fact that this process has also earned them recognition and a wonderful prize is yet another reason to celebrate!" said Laurel Labar-Ahmed, a teacher from École Massey.



Winners of the High School prize along with their teacher, Debra Albus and 3 of the contest judges.



Winners of the Elementary School prize along with their teacher, Debra Albus and 3 of the contest judges.



Students at Luther watching the awards be presented.

SCIC would also like to thank the judging team that worked hard watching a ton of videos and choosing winners. The judges were, Kathleen Wilson, Chris Miller, Craig Lederhouse, and Shayna Stock. Thank you!

Kaleidoscope is a joint initiative between the Saskatchewan Council for Inter-

national Cooperation, and the 6 other international development councils across the country. Funding for the video challenge is gratefully received from the Canadian International Development Agency. To learn more about Kaleidoscope and to watch the videos please visit [www.videochallenge.ca](http://www.videochallenge.ca)

# Travel with a purpose...

By Janice Thomas Gervais

My most memorable moments were of women pitching in to hoist the heavy bags of pumice or cement that took two volunteers to carry, laughing with family members over my twisted pronunciation of their names, or the proud moment when they would be photographed with the new 'appliance'. Once the stoves are up and running, it takes 3 weeks to cure, many women report that their eyes don't hurt anymore or that they now have more time to sew backpacks or do other jobs that provide a much needed supplementary income.

In February 2011 I returned from 3½ weeks in Guatemala. I took Spanish classes at Escuela Cooperativa in San Pedro before joining volunteers with the Guatemala Stove Project in Quetzaltenango. Canadian volunteers work with CEDEC, an indigenous non-profit group, in Guatemala's Western Highlands to build cook stoves for Maya families.

## Guatemala Stove Project

### The stoves:

- Eliminate indoor air pollution from open fire pits.
- Add as much as fifteen years to the life expectancy of each family member.



Janice with local mason, Marvin, Ontario volunteers Rowan, Bob and Margarita, and the proud new owners of a freshly finished cookstove: Francisca, Maria and children. Chirrenox village is near Quetzaltenango (or XELA to the locals).

- Conserve precious firewood. Cook stoves built for families also burn more efficiently so villagers use only half as many trees for fire wood in an area that is already suffering from deforestation.

The resources, energy and time freed up by these simple stoves are directed to small sustainable agricultural or marketing projects, thus bringing a degree of self-sufficiency, prosperity and hope for the future to these rural Mayan communities. Local masons are also trained to build stoves throughout the year which creates sustainable work for indigenous people.

For me, it is an opportunity to travel with the satisfaction of getting up close and personal with real Guatemalan families, to touch lives in a very 'concrete' way (pun intended, stoves are made out of cinder bricks and cement), and to contribute to the local economy. Stoves are built all year long by local masons with funding from generous Canadian donors.

It costs only \$225.00 to build one stove for a Maya family. If you are interested in funding a stove as a family, class or community get more information online at: <http://www.guatemalastoveproject.org/>



Janice masters the art of mixing mortar with the azadón (hoe).

# Challenging ourselves to be more effective

By Fraser Reilly-King

“So do you publicly disclose your finances and your activities? Who are your members? And who exactly are you accountable to?”

This was a question posed to me a few years ago by a Member of Parliament when I proposed bringing Canada’s Executive Director’s of the World Bank and IMF before Parliament – something that hasn’t happened since the early 1990s – as a means of holding them accountable before elected officials.

While the questioning initially threw me off guard – my responses thankfully satisfied my inquisitor – the question of civil society accountability and transparency, and even of our own effectiveness, is one that has firmly been on the international agenda since 2008. And it is one that we can’t ignore.

Since 2005, civil society organizations (CSOs) have been pushing governments to increase their aid effectiveness, but in the last several years, governments turned the question on its head, and asked civil society what they were doing to be more effective.

In June 2008, CSOs launched the Open Forum on Civil Society Development Effectiveness to consider the norms that we felt should guide our work as development actors. Let’s not forget that CSOs are not just service providers, we are donors (channelling globally approximately \$25 billion in money from private individ-

uals), aid recipients (\$9 billion in official aid from governments), development actors (setting our own priorities, programs and partnerships) and change agents.

In September 2008, at the Fourth High Level Forum on Aid Effectiveness, donor countries and recipient governments recognized this in the Accra Agenda for Action (AAA) – a mid-term review of the 2005 Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness. The AAA acknowledged that CSOs are “independent development actors in their own right”, who need to be involved in “country-level policy dialogue on development”, and with whom governments would work to ensure “that CSO contributions to development reach their full potential”.

With this acknowledgement came a hugely significant development – civil society was invited to the table. We now have official status on the Executive Committee of the Working Party on Aid Effectiveness (an informal group of donors, recipient countries, parliamentarians and civil society) and are helping to steer the process towards the next High Level Forum on Aid Effectiveness in Busan, South Korea.

Through the Open Forum process, which has organized more than 65 national consultations with thousands of organizations on CSO Development Effectiveness, we are looking to change the way our work is perceived and to challenge ourselves to be more effective, more accountable and more transparent.

In Istanbul in September 2010, based on the syntheses of all of the consultations, more than 200 organizations from 80 countries unanimously adopted the Istanbul CSO Development Effectiveness Principles – a set of normative values that collectively guides our work as CSOs, but provide the flexibility to be interpreted according to our own context specific environments.

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*Through the Open Forum process... we are looking to change the way our work is perceived and to challenge ourselves to be more effective, more accountable and more transparent.*

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The principles address eight areas: respect and promote human rights and social justice; embody gender equality and equity while promoting women and girls’ rights; focus on people’s empowerment, democratic ownership and participation; promote environmental sustainability; practice transparency and accountability; pursue equitable partnerships and solidarity; create and share knowledge and commit to mutual learning; commit to realizing positive sustainable change.

The Principles, the framework that spells out how we might implement those guidelines, and a set of minimum standards for a na-

tional environment that enables CSOs to implement the Principles, are three key elements of what civil society groups will be pushing at the high level meetings in Busan.

Presently the Canadian Council for International Co-operation (CCIC) is organizing an Open Forum, just ahead of our AGM, to bring this international work back to Canada and to think how we can operationalize the Principles in the current political environment.

It is not an easy task – change is never easy – but based on the four city meetings we have already conducted with members of CCIC and of the Provincial Councils, I am confident that we are up to the challenge. In the meetings, support for the Principles as a cornerstone of our work was undisputed, and it generated a swath of ideas on what we, in Canada, could do to implement them.

But more importantly, again and again, people felt that the Principles give us as a sector, an opportunity to tell the Canadian public a different story about development. One that shifts our story from charity – that targets help to needy people for primarily compassionate reasons – to one of justice, solidarity and human dignity. I for one am definitely up for that challenge.

*Fraser Reilly-King is a Policy Analyst with the Canadian Council for International Co-operation. His focus is on Aid and International Co-operation.*

## Teachings from the SCIC Headquarters

By Andrea Dorosh

A few nights ago my brother said to me “I can’t believe how much you have changed since working at SCIC. You may not see it because it happened over time, but it’s like night and day”. It’s just over 3 months now that I’ve been here and 3 days before I move on I get a sense that I’m just ‘waking up’ (to more than just my alarm clock).

What do I mean when I say ‘waking up’? I mean paying attention to what’s going on around me, inside me, in my community, and in the world. The truth is that I’m waking up to a world in crisis, to systems that are flawed, out of balance and collapsing. But I am also waking up to life. To the choices I make each day to smile, to offer my support, lend a hand and take a stand about something I care about, to be humble rather than greedy, to be engaged and get involved in my community. Needless to say, SCIC you’ve inspired me! And what I find myself wondering is how I can do more? I think it’s easy for us to ‘tune out’ and become self-absorbed, to fool ourselves into thinking that someone else’s problems on the other side of the world do not affect us. The truth is I take a lot for granted, so I choose to wake up.

The end of my internship with SCIC coincided with ‘Apathy into Action’, a qua-

si-annual conference hosted by SCIC and the Regina Public Interest Research Group (RPIRG). This conference is all about getting up off the couch and getting involved. Internationally acclaimed journalist Gwynne Dyer opened the conference on Thursday night, speaking about his recent book *Crawling from the Wreckage*, sharing his political insights and global predictions for the Middle East and North Africa. It was an engaging talk that required your undivided attention. He left me with a lot to think about, and certainly a lot more to learn about.

Apathy into Action resumed on Friday with a series of presentations at the U of R covering topics like: bottled water; the Slow Food Revolution; the Transition Town movement; LGBTQ; and more. My favourite was Slow Food. I love food, I wake up in the morning for food, I read cookbooks for fun on Friday nights, and dream about cookie recipes. I am of the opinion that we should actually be worshipping food – paying respect to that piece of broccoli on our plates, getting our hands dirty and really appreciating what it takes for us to have food. The presentations were a reminder that there are so many great people doing awesome work in this province! Plus I also saw that there is so much potential to start something and make change.

I spent Saturday in a Conflict Transformation workshop, one of two workshops offered. From dealing with a difficult co-worker to approaching a sensitive subject with a loved one, we became better acquainted with the mechanisms of conflict and the necessary steps that lead to solutions, and resolution. I found that respect, honesty and communication are important when it comes to creating and maintaining healthy relationships. If we all implemented these three things a little more often, we might just start making this world a better place.

So now what, as I approach this new chapter in my life?

Waking up. It’s simple, I can’t turn back, I can’t continue to move through this world in a haze, oblivious to the impact my choices have. And while I’m not leaving with all the answers to all the world’s problems, I’m leaving with the confidence to start new projects, get to know my community better, and get involved with more organizations that are fighting the good fight.

How often do we get to say that we left a job feeling rejuvenated and inspired? I had no idea this was going to happen. To my friends at SCIC, as Debra would say, “it’s been a slice”! I am truly glad I had this opportunity.



Andrea participating in the Conflict Transformation workshop as part of Apathy into Action

# Canadian Friends Service Committee

**F**ounded in 1931, Canadian Friends Service Committee (CFSC) acts on the peace and social justice concerns of the Religious Society of Friends (Quakers) in Canada. The outward expression of Quakerism is service. We are guided by a vision of a world in which peace and justice prevail, where the causes of war and oppression are removed, a world in which the whole of Creation is treated with respect and where individuals and communities are freed to reach their full potential.

### Work of CFSC committees includes:

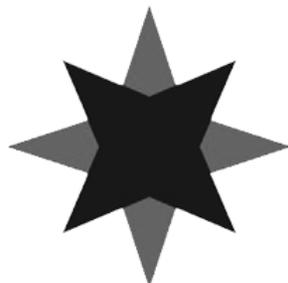
- educational work on peace, environmental issues, restorative justice, Aboriginal rights, Quaker testimonies and witness, peace building, economic alternatives, and international development projects;
- support of effective small-scale projects overseas and in Canada that help build sustainable communities as well as address Quaker concerns, such as peace in the Middle East and in Africa;
- engagement with governmental and other decision-makers on issues of concern, such as international trade agreements, human rights, corporate responsibility, militarism and war, Aboriginal land and treaty rights.

Where concerns meet, CFSC works with other Quaker service agencies and within the Canadian ecumenical social justice community.

### Care to Care: Continuing Medical Education in Iraq

Care to Care is a development project of CFSC that has received funding through SCIC and the Matching Grants in Aid Program. It is in the middle of its 3 year run, and is set to wrap up in 2012.

As a health project, Care to Care trains the local medical practitioners who carry out with their own hands the pre- and post-natal care of mothers and infants. The project contributes significantly to



Canadian Friends  
Service Committee  
(QUAKERS)

development by greatly increasing the effectiveness of an existing health service, thus saving important resources for the local community; it fosters self reliance by including a train the trainer component so that future training can be carried out by local people, and the number of people who can be trained can multiply as time advances; it makes maximum use of local resources by depending upon a local partner for participant accommodation and food, and for training facilities.

Our concern is for the thousands of women in the Kurdistan district who face the stark choice of going to a hospital where C-Sections are done 50% of the time or delivering at home with untrained lay midwives. It is also for the obstetricians, gynecologists and obs/gyn nurses who have not had access to continuing medical education so they do what they think is best, unaware of misinformation or recent evidence-based advances in practice. Finally, our concern is for those lay midwives who are often the closest, most practical resource for rural women. Their role can be developed very positively.

With this concern in mind, the International Committee of the Society of Rural Physicians of Canada and CFSC have organized a medical training team that has already visited Iraq three times,

to form working relationships with the local ministry of Health and university department of medicine, and to assess needs in the rural areas.

Considering the special challenges that Iraqi physicians and nurses face in this gender-specific profession, the team has determined to add an element of encouragement for reflective practice and networking. Trainees will make monthly practice reflection reports, and they will be given constructive feedback by the team and their Iraqi institutional partners. In the second and third year of the project, the team would like to add an element to the last day of the training curriculum for participants from previous training sessions to join in for common reflection on practice and to strengthen their network. The logistics of this may be difficult, and the details will have to be worked out with the local partners during the first year.

Each visit will be for 1 week, there will be 5 visits approximately 6 months apart. Training teams will consist of 4 instructors drawing from a pool of volunteers consisting of 3 obstetricians/ gynaecologists, 4 family physicians and 1 nurse/midwife.

By invitation, the team can do some or all of the following:

- Shadowing rural physicians at their work in order to expand our knowledge of the challenges that they face, and investigate opportunities to promote health amongst rural Iraqi citizens – including public and environmental health.
- Join with ministries of health and deans of medicine to assess their needs and plan project activities.
- Assist ministries of health and deans of medicine to design an equitable health care delivery system for rural people in their province, including greater attention and resource allocation to rural practice areas.



# Upcoming Opportunities & Events

## FRIDAY, JUNE 10

### "Modernizing Partnerships"— A Roundtable Discussion

2:00-4:00 pm

Saskatoon Community Services Village,  
Third Floor Board Room,  
506-25th Street East

SCIC is pleased to announce a visit with Darren Schemmer, Vice President of CIDA's Partnerships with Canadians Branch. Mr. Schemmer will hold a roundtable discussion with SCIC partners in Saskatoon on Friday June 10, 2011. This will be an opportunity for comments, questions and dialogue about changes at CIDA including the new proposal process and priority themes. RSVP to Joan at (306) 757-4669 or [scic@earthbeat.sk.ca](mailto:scic@earthbeat.sk.ca) or contact SCIC for more information.

## TUESDAY, JUNE 21

### National Aboriginal Day

National Aboriginal Day is a day recognizing and celebrating the cultures and contributions of the First Nations, Inuit and Métis peoples of Canada. There are events taking place all over Saskatchewan. Get involved with something near you!

## AUGUST 26-29

### Generating Momentum: Activist Leadership Training Camp

This four day, camp-style retreat in the Qu'Appelle Valley is a partnership between SCIC and RPIRG (Regina Public Interest Research Group). This is the second annual Generating Momentum, and last summer a sense of community was quickly established amongst the various activist and advocacy groups represented by all of those involved. A few of the broad issues discussed included globalization and trade agreements, food sovereignty, anti-oppression, and citizenship. Primarily, however, much of the camp was spent learning skills and tactics participants

can use in the real world. We aimed to create a safe, inclusive, challenging, self-reflective, dynamic, interactive and creative space within which all participants could gain an understanding of ways to fight all forms of oppression. At the end of the three days, we had an inspired crew of passionate, young Saskatchewanians, who are already taking steps to go out and make their worlds a better place. If you would like to be a part of this amazing camp check out SCIC's website, [www.earthbeat.sk.ca](http://www.earthbeat.sk.ca) or contact Vicki at [communications@earthbeat.sk.ca](mailto:communications@earthbeat.sk.ca) or 757-4669

## SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 25

### SCIC AGM 2011 in Saskatoon

Mayfair United Church, 902-33rd St. W  
More information will be available closer to the September. For now mark the date in your calendar, and get ready for a great day of learning and sharing about international cooperation!



## Canadian Cooperative Association's International Youth Internship Program (IYIP)

The Canadian Co-operative Association is pleased to announce the beginning of recruitment for the 2011 International Youth Internship Program (IYIP). This is an excellent opportunity for new and recent graduates aged 19 to 30 who are interested in working overseas. This internship program is part of the Government of Canada's Youth Employment Strategy, facilitated by CIDA's Youth Zone. Our objective is to provide a professional and personal development opportunity for young people interested in learning more about the co-operative and credit union system. The work placements are designed to broaden the intern's awareness of the global economy, to develop employable skills and to provide an opportunity to obtain meaningful work experience often needed to get that first job. For more information on CCA's International Youth Internship Program, please visit our website at [www.coopscanada.coop](http://www.coopscanada.coop) (search "IYIP").

**Deadline:** Applications are due to [interns@coopscanada.coop](mailto:interns@coopscanada.coop) by June 17, 2011.

## SCIC Development Issues Luncheons

These lunch time information sessions have always been popular in the past, and we want to make them even better! If you work or volunteer with an international development organization or have recently been working overseas, and would like to share your experience please get in contact with us! Not you? Well, if you work in an office or workplace with people who would be interested in getting a lunch hour presentation on an international development topic from someone who has been there, you should contact us as well. Call SCIC in Regina at 757-4669 or email Vicki at [communications@earthbeat.sk.ca](mailto:communications@earthbeat.sk.ca)