



2012 MATTERS

"Co-operatives, in their various forms, promote the *fullest* possible *participation* in the economic and social development of *all people*..."

-UN Resolution 64/136

The road to 2012...

In just over a year, hundreds of millions of people around the world will be celebrating co-operatives and credit unions. In small towns, large cities, cities and countrysides, co-ops and credit unions will be promoting their benefits; their business model; and their diversity. The United Nations International Year of Co-operatives (IYC) 2012 is a "gift" that has been given to the global co-operative movement and an invitation to broadcast our achievements and advantages. It is a year to stimulate thinking, creativity and leadership on legacy projects that will live beyond 2012.

The success of 2012 will depend on the engagement of co-operatives and credit unions at all levels in our co-operative system. Local grassroots co-operatives, Centrals and federations, and provincial and national associations, can and will all play a role in recognizing and celebrating the Year. That's why the **Canadian Co-operative Association** (CCA), an organized and multi-sectoral voice for Canadian co-operatives, will be developing and sharing resources and tools to assist co-ops and credit unions in their local, regional, provincial and sectoral efforts.

One of the ways that CCA will be sharing information is via this e-newsletter: *2012 Matters*. This is the first of our regular updates dedicated to the International Year of Co-operatives. Each issue will highlight initiatives related to the International Year-from the United Nations and the International Co-operative Alliance, from CCA and its members, and from other co-operatives and credit unions across

In This Issue

[International Preparations](#)

[Canada's 2012 Priorities](#)

[CCA's 2012 Action Plan](#)

[How can we get involved?](#)

[What is coming up?](#)

News Flash!

As this issue of *2012 Matters* was going to press, the United Nations announced that the official theme of IYC 2012 will be:

Co-operative enterprises build

Canada and around the world. We encourage you to share this newsletter with your colleagues and networks. To sign up and receive this newsletter directly, please follow the link at the bottom of the newsletter. You will be redirected to the CCA site for registration.

2012 will be an extraordinary year. There's a role for **everyone** to play **We are on the road to 2012**, and momentum, potential and possibilities are increasing every day!

International preparations



The International Co-operative Alliance (ICA) is working closely with the United Nations in preparation for 2012. The ICA Board at its meeting in Beijing in September 2010 agreed to focus on achieving one significant outcome for the year - **to raise public awareness and visibility of co-operatives**. It was agreed that this was the basis for progress with changing the perceptions and actions of policy-makers and accessing development funding.

The **ICA website** provides information about planning within the co-operative movement around the world. Here you'll find links to planning resources, a global calendar of events, and an e-bulletin *Countdown to 2012*. The CCA is a member of the ICA and Kathy Bardswick, President and CEO of The Co-operators, is Canada's representative on the ICA Board of Directors.

The **United Nations** has also created a website on the International Year of Co-operatives. Be sure to check it out.

CANADIAN 2012 Strategic Priorities

The members of the Canadian Co-operative Association (CCA) and the Conseil canadien de la coopération et de la mutualité (CCCM) passed resolutions at their 2010 annual meetings directing the two national organizations to take a leadership role in coordinating Canadian IYC 2012 activities. CCA and CCCM established a sector 2012 National Committee, made up of senior representatives from both networks. The National Committee identified strategic priorities for Canadian co-operatives and credit unions which included:



1. Increased awareness of co-operatives
2. Building the capacity of the co-operative sector and movement

a better world

Les coopératives, des entreprises pour un monde meilleur

The theme reflects the enormous contribution co-operatives and credit unions have made to the economic and social development of communities in Canada and globally. "Here in Canada, we know that co-ops and credit unions provide much-needed goods and services, create jobs and strengthen communities," said CCA Executive Director Carol Hunter.

"And through our partnerships with the co-operative sector in developing countries, we see first-hand how co-operatives of all kinds contribute to improving people's livelihoods and reducing poverty. It's very clear that co-operative enterprises *do* build a better world, and we're delighted that this will be the key message we'll be focusing on during the International Year."

The official logo for the International Year is expected to be released in January 2011.

Mark your calendar:

3. Creating legacy initiatives that will live beyond 2012

The National Committee emphasized the importance of engaging co-operatives at all levels in the system - local, provincial, and national - and the need to develop tools and materials that can be used or adapted for local use and need.

CCA and CCCM are also working with the federal government's Rural and Co-operatives Secretariat to ensure that co-op sector and federal government activities for 2012 are complementary.

CCA's 2012 Planning:

CCA's 2012 Action Plan is focused on the three strategic priorities above, with particular emphasis on communications, government relations, and the development of resources that can be used or customized for individual use. CCA's 45 members represent 2,000 organizations who, in turn, represent 9 million Canadian members. That's a lot of people with a lot of potential to broadcast the co-operative difference!



CCA's action plan will focus on leveraging the strength of the networks within the co-op system. We want to ensure that co-ops and credit unions are aware of the IYC and make it their own, while at the same time deliver common messages about the value and contribution of co-operatives. We will provide members, their members, and other co-operatives with tools, resources, data, downloadable logos, presentations and talking points, photos, ideas, and media material to help them promote co-operatives.

The Canadian IYC 2012 website, which is being created in partnership with CCCM and the Rural and Co-operatives Secretariat, is currently under construction. This site will be the key source for Canadian information and resources. The site will be launched in March 2011. In the meantime, check for updates and get more details on the CCA Action Plan and progress on the [IYC 2012 page on the CCA website](#). The Canada2012 website will also be a meeting place where co-ops and credit unions can share and get ideas; and where visitors can see what is happening across the country.

Social media will figure prominently in the national plans. Youth have been identified as an important target audience and it is through the use of YouTube, Facebook, and Twitter that we will better reach this audience.

CCA 2012 Webinar

JANUARY 2011						
SUN	MON	TUES	WED	THURS	FRI	SAT
30	31					1 New Year
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29

Join us:
January 12 at 1pm EST
for a webinar where we can update you on the CCA 2012 planning process, and hear from you about where your plans are at. To

Policymakers at the local, provincial, and federal level are another important audience. A coordinated CCA and CCCM federal government relations strategy to secure enabling legislation, funding, and policies will be our focus.

CCA's International Development program

Initiatives undertaken by CCA's International Development Program related to the International Year will be supported by charitable funds received through the Co-operative Development Foundation of Canada (CDF), and directly complement the overall Canadian 2012 priorities. Some of the 2012 International Development priorities include:

- Increased awareness, donations and involvement in CCA's ID program by Canadian co-operators
- Strengthening leadership of co-operatives and credit unions in less-developed countries, with a particular focus on women, youth and improved government relations
- Encouraging overseas partners to take advantage of 2012

How can you get involved?

It is at the local level that co-operatives and credit unions have the greatest potential to make a lasting impact on their members, employees and communities during the IYC. Here are just some of the ways that your local co-op or credit union can get involved:



- Reach out to local media (community newspapers, and radio stations)
- Join a local 2012 planning group with other co-ops and credit unions in your city or town. If no group already exists, start one.
- Engage local elected officials and encourage municipal councils to adopt resolutions recognizing the contributions made by co-operatives and credit unions to the local community.
- Brainstorm possible 2012 "Legacy" projects with your board or staff. Legacy projects might include the launch of a scholarship or research program on co-ops; or an orientation program that introduces new members and staff to other co-ops and credit unions in your community.

What is coming up?

register for this event, [click here](#).

ICA Director-General in Canada



The Director-General of the ICA, Charles Gould addressed the Ontario Credit Union Director's Forum on November 5, 2010. A video of his presentation is available [here](#).

There are plans and preparations currently underway at all levels of the sector. Over the next few months watch for:

- Release of the official IYC logo, expected in early 2011
- 2012 Webinar: January 12, 2011
- More details on communication resources and tools to be developed

Join Our Mailing List!

2012 Matters, an electronic newsletter published by the Canadian Co-operative Association, is distributed by e-mail. It is available free of charge to anyone with an e-mail address and an interest in 2012 UN International Year of Co-operatives. *2012 Matters* aims to provide news, updates, information and links about all things related to the International Year in Canada and around the world.

We welcome comments about the publication, about stories we have run, or suggestions for stories we should run. Send your correspondence to Tanya Gracie, Program Officer at tanya.gracie@coopscanada.coop or call her at 613-238-6711, ext. 243