

Mutualism and Cooperation

Like to make a difference the world???

SOCODEVI (the *Société de coopération pour le développement international*) is a non-profit private corporation that was founded in 1985 as the result of the combined efforts of several Quebec cooperatives and mutuals; their aim was to create an organization that would enable them to share their experience and expertise with developing countries.

Today, SOCODEVI is made up of 15 institutional members. One of those members is SSQ, Mutual Management Corporation, whose offices are located on the 23rd floor of Building 1 of the Samuel-Holland Complex. SOCODEVI is involved in many different industry sectors such as Agri-food, Insurance, Forestry, Funeral Services, Health Services, and Local Development, to name but a few.

Rather than focus all of its efforts in one place, SOCODEVI made a decision early on to promote the cooperative movement as a catalyst for change in the world. It achieves this by empowering local inhabitants through the creation of sustainable development in its partner countries.

In more concrete terms, SOCODEVI'S mission is to help local organizations to become more self-reliant, to the benefit of their members, by strengthening their ability to manage their own affairs. As these organizations adopt cooperative values and ways of doing business, opportunities for association and entrepreneurship increase. The individual persons involved enhance their social skills facilitating the development of commercial ties and activities.

Since its creation, SOCODEVI has provided support to over a million people in approximately 250 different co-op organizations and associations around the world! Over the course of the last year, SOCODEVI increased its presence in Africa, Asia and Latin America. Just a few of the many projects they are involved in included: strengthening financial services adapted to the needs of women in the Congo; providing technical and financial support to community organizations in Vietnam (production of beef and milk, rice, and onions); supporting projects related to the production of coffee and cacao in the Ivory Coast and Togo; transferring forestry technology in Uruguay; developing the tree nursery industry in Guatemala; supporting agricultural co-ops in Peru; and, finally, growing oregano crops in Bolivia!

Member institutions can support SOCODEVI's activities at different levels, for example by: participating in the administration of the organization, providing technical assistance to development projects, and raising awareness and disbursing information to SOCODEVI's 1.63 million members. Anyone who