

Social Media Manual

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1. Why Social Media is Important and Who Uses It?

The Internet and the worldwide web have transformed individual lives and the world as we know it. The emergence of communication technologies has broadened the scope of knowledge and urged communication in a variety of subjects, such as health, entertainment, global issues, and business, allowing people to express themselves, share their thoughts, knowledge and opinions online. Our globalized world has become microscopic as a result of telecommunications, allowing information to become accessible at the finger tips. The availability of information online has altered how it is used and how information is spread throughout the globe. Moreover, the emergence of social justice issues and social justice advocacy can be associated with the availability of information through media sources, provoking action by individuals who feel a sense of moral and social responsibility. Social media platforms are becoming increasingly popular on the Internet, and appear to be the hub of social engagements online. The Internet has become a web of communities where histories of information can be exchanged between groups such as non- governmental organizations, transnational companies, and non profit organizations. In addition, online networks are increasingly impacting community organizations and social justice mobilizations through the creation of social justice networks and ultimately online communities through a shared collective identity. The use of social media networks has increased dramatically in the last decade. Here are some statistics to help you get a grasp on who is active online.¹

1.1 How Canadians use social media

- ✓ Canadians ranked the highest in terms of Social Media usage in 2011 compared to USA

¹ (Donk, 2004) p.5; (Dumont, 2010) p. 13

- ✓ 50 % of Canadians use social media networks, that's approximately 17 million people across Canada
- ✓ 37% of online Canadian women visit a Social Media site at least once a day, compared to only 24% of online Canadian men.
- ✓ # of Canadians using social media increased by 4% since 2009, however the frequency of social media usage amongst Canadians increased dramatically between 2009-2011
- ✓ In 2010, 35% of online Canadians visited a Social Media site at least once a week , 19% visited everyday
- ✓ This increased by 50% in 2011 when 35% of online Canadians visited a social networking site everyday for also a longer duration of time
- ✓ 18-34 year old demographic are the most common users of Social Media in Canada, and
- ✓ 86% of that age demographic is active daily on Social Networks
- ✓ Almost 2/3 of people between 35-54 year olds and over 40% of those over the age of 55 in Canada are now actively using Social Media.

Furthermore, before creating a page for your organization or signing up for a social media database, it is essential to correspond the purpose of your organization to the right social media database in order to reach the intended audiences and everlastingly expand your organization's presence online. Different social media databases exist for different purposes, however as I will outline later on in the manual, it is possible to link certain social media platforms together, so that the information or content of the organization is available on different databases , but ultimately tracked back to one main database. Keep in mind that the more unique visitors long into certain social media databases, the more likely your presence will reach a broader audience.²

A unique visitor is defined by Wikipedia as “a statistic describing a unit of traffic to a website, counting each visitor only once in the time frame of the report. This statistic is relevant to site

² (Dumont, 2010); (Donk, 2004) p.5

publishers and advertisers as a measure of a site's true audience size, equivalent to the term "Reach" used in other media.” Here are some statistics to give you a better understanding of the mainly used social media databases in the world at the end of 2011, based on the number of unique visitors they attract per month.

1.2 Top Social Media Databases in the world

1. Facebook: 750,000,000 - Estimated Unique Monthly Visitors
2. Twitter: 250,000,000 - Estimated Unique Monthly Visitors
3. LinkedIn: 110,000,000 - Estimated Unique Monthly Visitors
4. MySpace: 70,500,000 - Estimated Unique Monthly Visitors
5. Google Plus+: 65,000,000 - Estimated Unique Monthly Visitors
6. Deviant Art: 25,500,000 - Estimated Unique Monthly Visitors
7. LiveJournal: 25,500,000 - Estimated Unique Monthly Visitors
8. Tagged: 19,500,000 - Estimated Unique Monthly Visitor
9. Orkut: 17,500,000 - Estimated Unique Monthly Visitors
10. CafeMom 12,500,000 - Estimated Unique Monthly Visitors³

Once you've established the database(s) you want to sign up for, the next step is to figure out where you want to show up online. Different organizations may have different objectives or intended purposes for signing up to a social media database, but on the other hand one of the main reasons some organizations will register their organization online is to get recognized and draw attention to the existence of the organization through the Internet. Here are the top visited

³ (eBizMBA, Top 15 Most Popular Social Networking Sites, 2012)

search engines in the world at the end of 2011 to help give you an understanding of how far you want to expand your organization's online presence.

1.3 Top Search Engines in the world

1. Google: 900,000,000 - Estimated Unique Monthly Visitors
2. Bing: 165,000,000 - Estimated Unique Monthly Visitors
3. Yahoo: 160,000,000 - Estimated Unique Monthly Visitors
4. Ask: 125,000,000 - Estimated Unique Monthly Visitors
5. Aol: 33,000,000 - Estimated Unique Monthly Visitors
6. MyWebSearch: 19,000,000 - Estimated Unique Monthly Visitors
7. Lycos: 4,300,000 - Estimated Unique Monthly Visitors
8. Dogpile: 2,900,000 - Estimated Unique Monthly Visitors
9. WebCrawler: 2,700,000 - Estimated Unique Monthly Visitors⁴

Although these statistics are presently accurate in the social media world, they are subject to change. Nevertheless, it is necessary to keep track of these changes for the benefit of your organization's presence online. Social media is the central paradigm of global networking in the 21st century, and the types of social media databases available are rapidly increasing. Now that you've gathered all this information, the next step is to get started.

2. Facebook

When it comes to the top visited social media database in the world, Facebook ranked first and has been at the top for at least the past five years. With over 850,000,000 active users mid-way

⁴ (eBizMBA, Top 15 Most Popular Search Engines, 2012)

through 2012, and over 750,000,000 unique monthly visitors, this indicates that one in 13 people in the world are signed up on Facebook. Facebook has become the central social media database in which other databases connect, allowing information to be shared freely from other databases onto Facebook, the central hub of social media web sites.

For an organization, it is more beneficial to create a page than registering your organization as a person, giving you the privileges of keeping track of the number of people who visit your page.

To set up a page for your organization, you would start by going to the Facebook web site,

www.Facebook.com, and when you scroll to the bottom of the screen, you will see [Create a Page](#)

for a celebrity, band or business on the bottom on the right hand side of the page (Figure 1).

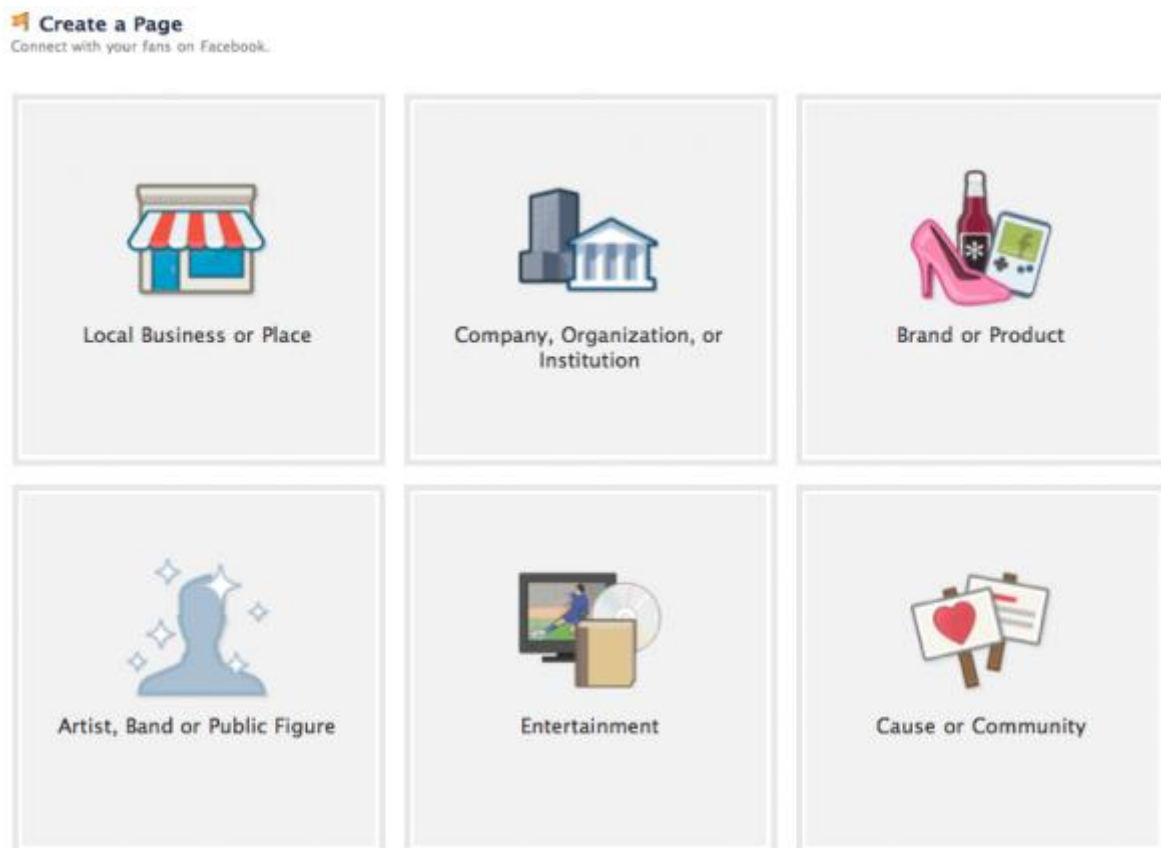
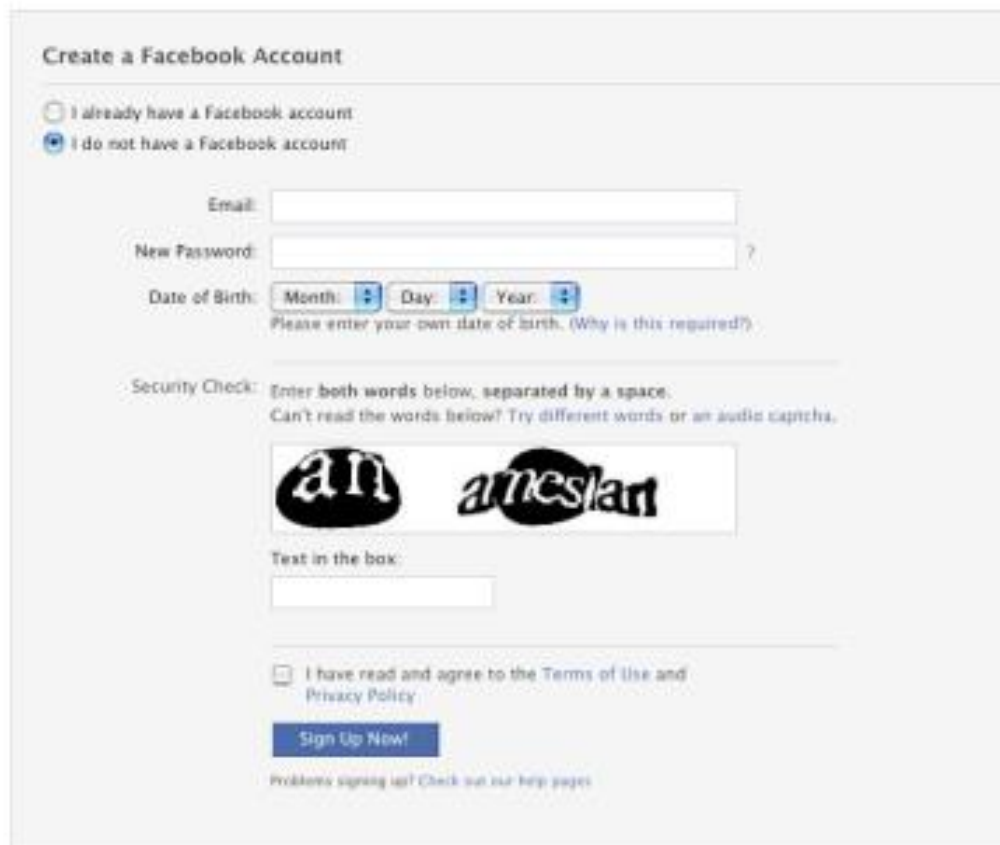


Figure 1: "Create a Page" screenshot

Click on the option that best suits your organization. When you click on the Company, Organization or Institution option, it will take you further to fill in the type of organization you want to register. Facebook offers many diverse options including, Bank, Financial institution, Church, Health Beauty, Computer technology, and the list goes on. After choosing the type of organization you wish to register, the next step is to write your company name, click on the box that says, I agree to [Facebook Pages Terms](#), and finally click on the get started button for creating a Facebook account (Figure 2).



The screenshot shows the 'Create a Facebook Account' form. At the top, there are two radio button options: 'I already have a Facebook account' (unselected) and 'I do not have a Facebook account' (selected). Below these are input fields for 'Email', 'New Password', and 'Date of Birth' (with dropdown menus for Month, Day, and Year). A security check section follows, with the instruction 'Enter both words below, separated by a space.' and the words 'an' and 'ameslan' displayed in a stylized font. Below the words is a text input box labeled 'Text in the box:'. At the bottom, there is a checkbox for 'I have read and agree to the Terms of Use and Privacy Policy' and a blue 'Sign Up Now!' button. A link for 'Problems signing up? Check out our help pages' is located at the very bottom.

Figure 2: “Create a Facebook Account” screenshot

If you already have a personal Facebook account, you can click on the first option and login in with you personal account. However if you do not have a personal Facebook account, or if you do not want to have your Facebook page linked or attached to your personal account, you can

click on the second option, and fill in the information required as shown in the image above, click sign up and a confirmation email will be sent to the email address you've used to sign up for the Facebook account. Once you've confirmed the registration by clicking on the link sent to your email, you will be taken to a page where you will be asked to upload a picture or logo that represents your organization, however you have the option of selecting the skip button, if you would like to upload a picture at a later time. Next, in the following page, you are required to fill in a brief description of your organization. Once you've filled in the info, do not forget to click save, or if you want to come back to this at a later time, you have the option of selecting "skip." Once you've completed this option, you will be directed to the Admin Panel for your page – now your organization's page is ready to be active on Facebook (Figure 3)!



Figure 3: "Admin Panel" screenshot



3. Twitter

Twitter is the second largest social media database in the world. Although it was created by Jack Dorsey only six years ago, it had over 140 million active users mid-way through 2012. Twitter allows you to express yourself in 140 characters or less, allowing people to “retweet”, or share your post with others. To sign up for Twitter, you go to www.Twitter.com. Once you’ve arrived to the website, look on the right hand side where it says “New to Twitter? Sign up.” Fill in your full name, enter an email, and create a password, and click “Sign up for Twitter.” You will then be taken to a page that says “Join Twitter Today.” The information that you have provided on the homepage will already be visible, and if you are ready to confirm that information, click on create account. Once you’ve followed all the following steps, you are ready to be active on Twitter, and you may start “following” other people, or organizations to see what they’ve been posting, or “tweeting” about. Due to the limited amount of characters (140) one has to express themselves, there are abbreviations specifically used to communicate on Twitter.

3.1 Twitter abbreviations

RT = Retweet, this means you want what you’ve posted to be shared by other individuals.

‘**TB**’ = Tweet back, this means you want a response to the tweet you’ve posted

PRT = Partial Retweet / Please Retweet. In the first sense, PRT means the RT’ed tweet has been edited, usually to fit a username within the character limit.

OH = Overheard. ‘OH’ is commonly used at conferences or while traveling. OH indicates a quotation of someone else’s remarks. [@overheard](#) is all about the OH, like the way Overheard in the Blogosphere covers IT.

DM = Direct Message. DMs are Twitter’s email. “DM me” means take the discussion private. Long conversations should go into DMs. *Note:* Adding “DM” to the front of a tweet does NOT = a direct message, at least yet.

@ = Reply to [username]. @ can also be used expressing ‘at,’ as in location.

BTW = By The Way. It’s Twitter’s version of segue.

FTW = For the Win. Whatever the action or product FTW modifies is *good*. [@RWW](#) explained [the origin of FTW](#), BTW.

FTL = **For the Loss (or For the Lose)**. FTL is generally an expression of disappointment, disapproval or dismay. It’s the opposite of FTW.

FF= Follow Friday. This expression is used with a hashtag (#) beside with names of users; @so and so that you recommend others to follow. This is usually done on Fridays.

IRL = In Real Life. What’s true on Twitter may not be true IRL.

FTF = Face to Face. FTF or F2F refers to an actual meeting in person, IRL. That can mean at a tweetup or other occasion where you might encounter other Twitterers.

IMHO = In My Honest Opinion. IMHO usually indicates that ‘This is an op-ed tweet, not a factual assertion.

YMMV = Your Mileage May Vary. In other words (IOW), what’s true in my experience (IMX) may differ from yours if you try ____ product/service/technique.

BR = Best Regards. BR is a useful way of being cordial, particularly when making a difficult request, submitting a complaint, or when introducing yourself.

B/C = because. “b/c” is not the same as the blind carbon copy (BCC) used in email.

JV = Joint Venture. A JV refers to a collaborative enterprise between Twitterers.

LMK = Let Me Know. Tweet me back (TMB) when you have more information about a question or a decision on a request.

The language of Twitter may seem like a whole new world, but once you’ve become familiarized with the meaning behind the abbreviations, the lines of communication become more clear and thoughts become easier to express. Moreover, the terms are not all there is to know about Twitter. There are a few simple rules that exist in the tweetsphere. Firstly, once you follow someone, you have access to their tweets, but it does not mean that the other

person automatically has access to your tweets. Furthermore, if someone is a follower and you follow them, once you decide to 'unfollow' that person, they will still have access to your tweets unless you decide to block them. To block someone, go to the profile of the person you wish to block and beside the following button, click on the icon with a person on it, and you will see the following options. Tweet to, Send a direction message, add or remove from lists, block @____, Report @_____, turn off retweets, turn on mobile notifications. Also, once you've blocked someone while you were still following them, you automatically lose them as a follower because blocking them, 'unfollows' them. You cannot send a direct message (DM) to someone who is not following you, or access a person's tweets if they have their tweets protected, unless you've sent them a request to follow, and the request is accepted. Last but not least, when you 'retweet' (RT) something that has already been retweeted by someone else, you are not tweeting the person who retweeted the post, however you are retweeting the post of the original tweeter. When trying to increase the number of followers for your organization or company, one of the best and easiest ways to do this is by adding the Twitter button onto your web site as well as tweeting as often as you can in order to gain followers.

One of the best ways to get your tweets recognized in the tweetsphere is by placing # (hash tag) beside a tweet which allows the tweet to be discoverable when someone looks up that name or topic. For example, "the roots of education are bitter but the fruit is sweet" Aristotle. #wisdom #quotes. When a person searches #wisdom or #quotes, all the tweets with that hash tag will appear, allowing others to access or retweet those tweets.

3.2 How to add the Twitter button to your site



1. Log into Twitter
2. Click resources at the bottom of the details pane on the right hand side of your screen (Twitter home page)
3. Select “Create Follow Button”
4. Select the Follow Button that you wish to display on your site; customize it to your liking
5. Copy and paste the generated code into the HTML of your website wherever you would like the button to appear
6. You’re done!

3.3 Adding the Twitter button to profiles

1. Your Twitter profile already has a follow button to help users follow you. (Note: You will not see a follow button when you view your own profile.)
2. At this time, the follow button cannot be added to Facebook profiles. Log in and click on Applications. Browse and manage the different Applications you've authorized to use Twitter using the menu on the left-hand side of the page (Figure 4).



Figure 4: Twitter Applications menu

4. How to Create an Online Presence

In essence, an organization's online presence is valuable to the recognition of its existence and beneficial for member recruitment and marketing. In order to create an online presence one must already have established the targeted audience. Once that has been established, it is easier to accomplish the aims and objectives of the organization. Once the aims and objectives of the organization have been set and identified, the vision or direction of the organization is clearer to the intended audience. Transparency of the organization's purpose and objectives is important in building the trust of a network; nevertheless another intriguing tip is to strengthen the organization's online presence is by reaching to a large collective identity. With this in mind, exposing the organization's online presence to a larger group of people will make the organization's online presence stronger in the search engines. An easy approach to this process is attracting the intended audience through aligning the organization's aims and objectives with a focus that will attract a large network of people. The larger the network, the more visible the organization becomes in search engines, and the stronger the online presence in the search engines. This may seem like a multi-layered process, nevertheless building a large online network, while strengthening the organization's online presence is a dual process.

However important to keep in mind is that no matter the focus of the organization, the collective identity must build capacity starting from within the organization and then expanded to a larger network of people creating the intended online collective identity. People will eventually seek to gravitate towards others of a like interests and perspectives. The fact that social media allows people from opposite ends of the sphere to communicate, relate, and take collaborative action on a global scale, has been the strength of organizations that have online networks and therefore

have a strong online presence. The availability of information online has altered how it is used and how information is spread throughout the globe. Furthermore, the emergence of social justice issues and social justice advocacy can be associated to the availability of information through media sources, provoking action on individuals who feel a sense of moral and social responsibility on behalf of individuals socially harmed.

Another simple method that can strengthen your organization's presence in search engines is simply fit commonly used and identifiable terms for search engines into your organization's description. This way the organization's presence becomes more accessible in the search engines when key words in the description of the organization are searched. In the case of this project, my aims and objectives are to promote the aims and objectives of the Kawartha World Issues Centre (KWIC) through the promotion of KWIC events, broadening of world issues with a local connection based on KWIC's mandate.

Fundamentally, the flow of information for KWIC was centred on Facebook as a means of presenting all sources of information from other web sites and social media databases. The information posted on the KWIC web site, such as upcoming community events, articles posted on the blogs, KWIC videos uploaded to the KWIC YouTube channel, as well as tweets from KWIC's Twitter all appeared on the KWIC Facebook page. This is a great way of linking all the content on the different social media platforms in a way that they can feed off of each other without losing your audience. For instance, upcoming KWIC events on the KWIC web site were tweeted, and the tweets were linked so that they appeared on the KWIC Facebook page. Furthermore, articles that were published on behalf of KWIC events or other relevant

information to KWIC were posted on the blog available on the KWIC web site. When visiting the KWIC web site, one is able to access the KWIC Facebook page by clicking on the Facebook button on the top of the web site. This is a great technique to keep your audiences interested but not confused, by having different information available through different databases while having some connection between all the content and how it is followed through the databases.⁵

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Appendix 1: Social Media Work for Kawartha World Issues Centre

During my Community-Based Education project, I wrote several articles for KWIC (full text articles below). The *purpose* of the articles was to promote KWIC events and educate Trent students and the broader Peterborough community on social issues related to KWIC's mandate. The *Audience* for my articles was students and community members interested in social justice and environmental issues. The articles were promoted in various ways: dialogue starting within KWIC and building capacity through KWIC working groups, Trent-OXFAM, workshops, and KWIC events. Articles were posted on the KWIC Blog and Facebook page, while building an online presence with KWIC's new Twitter account. I also promoted KWIC events in the same way.

Hunger and the World Food Economy at the KWIC World Issues Cafe

Written by Yolanda Ajak, KWIC Media Liaison

Published on Tuesday, 11 October 2011 12:31

Food is an essential component to human life. Imagine going to bed hungry, waking up hungry and not knowing where your next meal will come from. This is the daily life and struggle of nearly a billion people worldwide.

The unremitting rise in global food prices is not only problematic for low income families, but it also constitutes a major threat to food security particularly in developing countries. According to the World Bank, between 2010-2011 incessantly rising food costs have resulted in over 70 million people living in extreme poverty, 44 million since June alone.

The price surge for wheat and maize may be an inconvenience for us, but it is a serious issue for the world's poor who spend more than 50% of their incomes on food. The number of hungry people worldwide is continually increasing, and little attention is paid to the role of global financial markets in shaping the world food systems.

In today's global international market, the well-being of a country may depend on the export of goods from another country. Russia, one of the world's leading wheat producers was ravaged by fires during the summer of 2010 record breaking heat wave. Wheat harvests in Ukraine have also dropped 15% as a result of incompetent weather. Both countries have exercised export bans on

the commodity therefore resulting on world shortages of the commodity. And like the domino affect, the price of wheat has gone up in the international market.

October 16, 2011 will mark the 32nd annual World Food Day, a globally acknowledged day to commemorate the creation of the UN's Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) of the United Nations. The theme of this year's FAO World Food Day program is "Food Prices- From Crisis to Stability." The objective of this year's theme is to explore the impacts of food prices on the poor and explore alternatives to prevention of the patterns of increasingly rising global food prices.

In conjunction with World Food Day, Kawartha World Issues Centre is hosting a free World Issues Café on Thursday October 18 at 5:30pm at the Market Hall. This event will include a community feast of Indigenous black bean soup from Grandfather's Catering, wild rice salad from Food Not Bombs, and traditional corn tortillas and salsa provided by Ivan and the Chocó Sol Tortilla Project, followed by a presentation and discussion. During the feast, several local groups working on food issues, such the Peterborough Community Food Network will be represented to share information about their work creating links between the local and global food systems.

Keynote speaker Dr. Jennifer Clapp will focus on the features of the world economy that make the business of food more and more like a global gambling casino. Clapp will give an overview of the causes and possible solutions to the problem of rising global food prices. Clapp is a Professor and CIGI Chair of Environmental Global Governance, Balsillie School of International Affairs and the Department of Environment and Resource Studies, at the University of Waterloo. Clapp is a renowned researcher in the areas of Global food and environment politics and governance; environment and development; trade and environment/agriculture; politics of food aid; global politics of hazardous and plastic waste; agricultural biotechnology and implications for developing countries; transnational corporations and environment. She is also the author of a number of books, including two upcoming works: *Food (Polity, 2011)* and *Hunger in the Balance: The New Politics of International Food Aid (Cornell, 2012)*.

The issue of hunger and the scarcity of food is abominable and inescapable. This is your chance to play a role. As Jacques Diouf stated (FAO Director General) "Hunger is not an issue of charity. It is an issue of Justice".

Mass Consumption, Mass Extinction?

Written by Yolanda Ajak, Kawartha World Issues Centre

Published on Monday, 14 November 2011 13:07

"Infinite growth of material consumption in a finite world is an impossibility" - E.F. Schumacher

The environmental crisis of our time is accelerating at the rate of no return. If human beings do not rapidly enforce sustainable ways of life, humans face the possibility of destroying all life on earth including the human race itself.

The increasing gap between the rich and the poor, spiking food prices, global warming, depletion of our natural resources, and wildlife extinction are all various components consequentially caused by our mass consumption behaviour. A United Nations report indicates that our current rate of consumption will ultimately use the resources of one and a half planets. Unfortunately, we are all consuming from one planet – planet Earth – and we are exhausting it.

The population of the world's people has just reached 7 billion and continues to rise consistently. With that in mind, consumption patterns need to be reduced in order to create sustainability. Canada's sustainability report says, “Historically, rates of consumption and pollution have been rising faster than population, both in Canada and globally.” Yet the report notes that spending on low-carbon energy sources is less than 2% of the lowest required estimates. It is clear that there is much work to be done.

In order to tackle the environmental crisis of our time, it is evident that people need to work collectively to overcome the deterioration of our planet by confronting the main issue of mass consumption. The World Wildlife Fund (WWF) reports that “Over 53% of the world's fisheries are fully exploited, and 32% are overexploited, already depleted, or recovering from depletion.” Statistics also show that up to 90% of the ocean's large fish have already been fished out. Moreover, environmental researchers state that Arctic sea ice is melting at a rate of 9% per decade, endangering the habitat and existence of arctic animals. The winter season is being cut short as ice is forming later during the year and melting earlier in the spring.

As a Peterborough community – like all responsible communities – we need to drastically reduce waste, and alter our production and consumption habits, or Canada will have to take major environmental measures with no guarantee of positive results. This means making cautious decisions toward economic growth through environmental degradation reduction, renewable development strategies and sustainable means of survival.

Canadians for Mining Awareness, a working group of the Kawartha World Issues Centre (KWIC), are helping to host a film event featuring the documentary, Gasland, about natural gas extraction. Otherwise known as ‘fracking,’ this resource extraction method has created catastrophic human, animal and environmental damage. Join us Tuesday, November 15th, 6:30-8:50pm, at Sadleir House, George Street Peterborough. \$5 or pay what you can to support the Transition Reskilling Institute.

Global financial troubles becomes global food troubles

Written by Yolanda Ajak, World Issues & Media Liaison

Published on Monday, 28 November 2011 12:41

There is no doubt that the current global financial system is detrimental to the poor, the environment and to ourselves, but the remaining fact is that this system is still our responsibility. The effect of climate change on the food system is noticeable in terms of rising food prices.

Canada Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada reports that “Canada and the United States enjoy the largest bilateral trading relationship in the world, with two-way trade in goods and services reaching \$649 billion last year.” Agriculture and agri-food bilateral trade accounted for \$35 billion of this total.

As of 2010, with a population of just over 34 million, 61% of Canadians are employed and out of that percentage, just below 10% of Canadian jobs (2 million) depend on trade with the U.S. In addition approximately eight million Americans depend on trade with Canada.

Furthermore, the increase in prices of necessities such as grain is a consequence of reduction in output due to apparent issues such as our changing weather.

Canada places 7th among the largest wheat producers of the world, earning the highest of all of Canada’s exported agricultural products amounting to approximately \$5.4 billion in revenues.

Canada also places as the second-largest wheat exporter in the world after the United States. Increasingly over the past several years, Canada has been experiencing a tremendous reduction in wheat growth due to wet land, which was also a central issue to wheat production this past May.

Land is also an essential component to a country’s security of its resources when it comes to food scarcity, a progressively growing concern in first world countries, affecting food prices.

“Investor” countries have decided to promote deals such as “land grabs”, which are government-owned investments central to the dominance of private sector investments in the production of bio-fuel industry. Bio-fuel investments have been the key driving force behind initiatives portrayed as “food security concerns”.

The process of bio-fuel production is not only destructive to the environment through the increase of carbon emissions due to deforestation for land space, but is also an issue for possible water contamination through chemical infusion. Bio-fuel production consists of two major groupings of fuels achieved through the process of hydrolysis and fermentation in warm environment. Bioethanol is an alcohol created through the fermentation of carbohydrates in starch crops such as sugar cane and corn, and Biodiesel is made by causing a chemical reaction between vegetable oil and animal fat-based lipids and alcohol. The final production process yields results of ethanol and carbon dioxide.

Although governments promote finding “alternative” energy sources, the success of preserving energy without compromising our environment is still in question.

Policies are in place through taxation, banks, and sectoral legislation on land, just to name a few of some of the policies that make these government investments possible. The panic over the depletion of renewable energy sources along with aims of securing energy to maintain the current rate of energy consumption has lead governments to resort to such extraction methods as an increasing option for future investments.

International investors purchase hundreds of thousands of hectares of land in Latin America, Central Asia, South East Asia, and Africa for agricultural business production which not only deprive these citizens of their land, but also depletes their land.

Newly arising government policies are deeply rooted in the perpetuation of the current toxic economic system. A reformation of the global food system is needed and is possible starting with supporting local farmers and food growers. As a people we need to take back the system that governs us and take responsibility for what's happening to our world.

If you're interested in the intersections of Food, Climate and Gender and how they interplay in our global system, you might consider participating in a new KWIC/OXFAM working group that currently meets every Wednesday at 11am in the KWIC Global Education and Resource Centre, located in the Environmental Science Building, Room B101

Canada World Youth Advocates on Behalf of Tanzania

Written by Yolanda Ajak, Kawartha World Issues Centre

Published on Monday, 05 December 2011 12:32

The trade of agricultural goods in the global market economy has expanded consumer preferences and altered food choices. Developing technologies have led to substantial increase in agricultural production, with higher quantities of food in the international market as the main objective. As a result of this system, western countries go into developing countries and exploit workers for resources to be sold back to western countries.

Since developing countries lack economic stability, most developing countries rely on exports of valuable resources to repay international debts or as a major source of the country's income. This process is fairly evident in countries such as Tanzania. Farmers are employed at dishonourably low wages, which do not equate to the amount of labour and tools needed for production. Eventually, the external companies buy the land due to the farmers' inability to afford to continue to maintain it.

After attaining colonial independence from Britain in 1961, Tanganyika and Zanzibar united in 1964 to form the nation formerly known today as Tanzania. Tanzania is a country located in East Africa, borders the Indian Ocean, and resides between Kenya and Mozambique. In size, Tanzania is slightly smaller than the province of British Columbia, Canada, with a population just under 45 million. Its climate varies from tropical to mildly chilled temperatures, more frequently subject to drought, due to effects of climate change on the Tanzanian agricultural economy. Agriculture makes up half of the national economy as well as three quarters of market exports (approximately 85%) in Tanzania. Moreover, peasant farmers amount up to 80% of the Tanzanian workforce.

Richard Ndendya, a volunteer at Kawartha World Issues Centre (KWIC), is a Tanzanian student here on exchange with the Canada World Youth Program for three months. Richard was granted

this opportunity through Uvikiuta, a non-profit organization that deals with environmental issues, in Dares Salaam, the commercial capital of Tanzania. Ndendya delivered an outstanding presentation about climate change and the Tanzanian agricultural economy to Oxfam members, a KWIC working group that meets every Wednesday to discuss the intersection of, climate change, food, and gender.

Coffee is one of the most important cash crops for the Tanzanian economy and is mostly exported from Kilimanjaro, Tanzania. Ndendya claims, “Companies are buying the farmlands from the farmers and employing Tanzanians as labourers for very low wages. 1kg of coffee is sold for 1000 shillings,” which equates to about \$1.00 in U.S currency. In North America, just a cup of coffee is up to \$3.00. As Ndendya explains, the coffee beans are sold to foreign companies residing in the country who then trade it as a commodity to external countries. Due to price exploitation, farmers began to resist to cooperation with the cash crop industry.

Due to climate change, the country experiences extreme rainfall in comparison to Tanzania’s normal rainy season. As Ndendya recalls, “the flood two years ago destroyed homes, there was hunger, homelessness, and major economic losses in tourism. Currents in the Indian Ocean are so high, causing severe stormy weather.” Moreover, Mount Kilimanjaro is the highest mountain in Africa, and as a consequence of warmer weather, the melting snow caused erosions, putting the people of the town at dangerous risk of their lives, as well as risking their crops and livestock.

Ndendya states that coordinators on behalf of a Swiss company took initiative through their own independent project to spread environmental awareness and climate change through informative workshops in Tanzania. Ndendya got to participate in a 2000km bike ride that last over 2 months which served to spread awareness about current environmental issues in the globe and the effects on the region of Tanzania.

Global warming as currently experienced worldwide is an increase in the earth’s temperatures, and rise in sea levels. This global phenomenon is caused by CO2 emissions polluting the air as a result of trapped heat from the sun in the earth’s atmosphere heating up the planet. In Tanzania, sea levels have risen, extreme floods have occurred, with poverty, hunger and homelessness as the end result. All of this in addition to the exploitation of farmers whose daily lives depend on the country’s agriculture. Where does a country turn?

Diamonds in the Rough

Written by Yolanda Ajak, Kawartha World Issues Centre

Published on Monday, 23 January 2012 13:04

The civil war in Sierra Leone between 1991-2002 resulted in the deaths of over 50,000 and the displacement of over a million citizens. During the first year of war the Revolutionary United Front (or RUF, a rebel army that fought and failed in the 11 year civil war) seized control of large strips of territory in Eastern and Southern Sierra Leone that were rich in alluvial diamonds.

The lack of immediate government response to the RUF, and the consequent disturbance in the country's diamond production, led to a Coup d'état on April 1992 by the National Provisional Ruling Council (NPRC). In 2009 the RUF were convicted of war crimes and crimes against humanity.

In an internally hostile environment of economic inequality and violent conflict, the children were the most traumatized.

Mariatu Kamara was born and raised in the West African nation of Sierra Leone. Her harrowing experiences as a child victim of war and its aftermath are the subject of her memoir *The Bite of the Mango* (2008). Her survival story is one of breath taking courage, hope and inspiration. Mariatu was 12 years old when her family and the rest of her village fled from approaching armed rebels with the Revolutionary United Front.

Presently, Mariatu is a college student in Toronto and her professional aspirations for the future include working for the United Nations, raising awareness of the impact of war on children, and running her own foundation to raise money for homes. Eventually she would like to build homes for abused women and children in Sierra Leone.

She was honored the position as a UNICEF Special Representative for Children and Armed Conflict, which involves speaking to groups across North America about her experiences.

Prior to her involvement with UNICEF, she was a public speaker for Free the Children, a non-profit organization that acts on issues facing children in developing countries. She was also honored with a Voices of Courage Award in New York City, an award presented by the Women's Refugee Commission.

Back in Sierra Leone at the Amputee Camp for war wounded citizens in Aberdeen Mariatu developed close ties with other young people who had suffered through the same atrocities of the brutal civil war. She and others began their internal healing process through the performing arts as members of Aberdeen's Theatre Troupe. Mariatu sang, danced, and told stories that preserved their strength and hope, and restored forgiveness. They tribute their emotional healing to the Theatre Troupe created in the camp.

Mariatu plans on reuniting several members of Aberdeen's theatre troupe. Her goal is to maintain this as an ongoing project so that she can instill the knowledge of peacekeeping skills that she is learning through her own work in other youth.

In conjunction with the ReFrame Film Festival, KWIC is hosting a World Issues Café with speaker Mariatu Kamara, this Saturday January 28. From 6-7pm, the Mix & Mingle reception & book signing will take place at Art Space catered by Black Honey. At 7:30pm: The KWIC Issues Café presentation will resume at Showplace "Youth, War and the Arts: A Journey to Transformation" followed by *To Be Heard* (USA, 87 minutes), the Saturday Night feature film.

Join us while we listen to this young woman's survival story of the civil war in Sierra Leone. Tickets are \$10, on sale at KWIC in the Environmental Science Building room B.101.

200 Million Fewer Women in the World: Recognizing International Women's Day

Written by Yolanda Ajak

Published on Monday, 12 March 2012 18:14

"I don't need a relationship to define who I am. I will be fine, I am a strong woman" - Unknown

International Women's Day, March 8, is an annual occasion recognized worldwide by the United Nations, women's groups, and other organizations that recognize the historical struggle of women for equality and social justice. This day assembles women of different racial, ethnic, linguistic, cultural, economic, and political backgrounds in unison to celebrate the significance of women's struggles. As time passed this day has become an extended celebration of peace, strength, and inclusiveness among women and people of diverse social identities.

First and foremost, the struggle of women for equality is so significant simply due to the fact that it was initially entrenched in supreme law and marriage vows. Marriage in the 1800's granted men complete control of women including their bodies and inheritance. Women were controlled by their Fathers, brothers, and husbands, before having any self authority. Along with slaves, servants, the criminally insane, and men who did not own property, women were not recognized as citizens and did not earn the right to vote or participate in any political affairs.

The large enlistment of men in World War 1 resulted in a shortage of men taking on the roles of society, resulting in the exposure of women to different types of jobs that were not regularly taken on by women such, as heavy duty labour work, and certain administrative positions.

Initially, the right for women to vote was permitted in increments starting with women who served as nurses in WW 1, then women who were British subjects and who were wives, widows, mothers, sisters and daughters of those who had served or were serving in the Canadian or British military or naval forces. Unmarried women and widows were first granted the right to vote in municipal elections in Ontario in 1884. Such limited voting rights were eventually approved in other provinces across Canada at the end of the 19th century. However, the bill for women to vote in provincial elections was continuously denied until Manitoba ultimately succeeded in 1916 with Alberta following the same year

These laws were eventually replaced with the 19th amendment passed in the United States on June 4, 1920, which was the same time women in Canada earned the right to vote and run for public office. It was not until 1960 that all women including indigenous women over the age of 18 regardless of ethnic background or origin were permitted to vote and run for office in Canada.

In 1928, the Supreme Court ruled that women were not "persons" under the British North America Act, and therefore could not be appointed to senate. On October 18, 1929 women were finally declared "persons" under Canadian law and this historical victory was succeeded due to the perseverance of five Alberta Women, Emily Murphy, Nellie McClung, Irene Parlby, Louise McKinney and Henrietta Muir Edwards.

Presently International Women's Day is commemorated in several other countries (including Russia, Ukraine, Kazakhstan, and Armenia to name a few) as a public holiday whereby government offices, businesses, and educational institutions are closed for the day. While embracing the importance of this day, women are building upon the tradition while acknowledging at least nine decades of struggle.

International Women's Day was initially celebrated by and later adopted by the United Nations to be celebrated on March 8 during International Women's Year in 1975. Shortly after, in 1977, the U.N General Assembly endorsed a declaration to implement a United Nations Day for Women's Rights and International Peace, to be recognized by nations in accordance with their national traditions. The aims and objectives in implementing this resolution were to increase awareness on the vital role of women in peace efforts and development, with aims to end discrimination and achieve women's full and equal contribution to the world.

On March 8, the Kawartha World Issues Centre held a World Issue's Cafe in the presenting a forum discussion with this year's theme posing the question, "How do we dismantle a culture that promotes violence and isolation?" The panel discussion was moderated by Dr. Nadine Changfoot, Associate Professor in Politics at Trent University while the guest speakers presented different perspectives of their struggles.

Sid Jordan and Selma Al-Aswad came to Canada to join us from Seattle, USA, on behalf of the Re-teaching Gender and Sexuality Project and Put THIS on the MAP, discussing issues surrounding homelessness, emotional abandonment, and a lack of having a support network due to their gender and sexuality preferences in addition to heightened racial oppression especially after 9/11.

Paula Sherman, Associate Professor in Indigenous Studies, Trent University, and Co-Chief of the Ardoch Algonquin First Nations, went on to discuss the importance of decolonization and restoration of women's knowledge, educating the youth, and re-establishing their relationship to the land. Professor Sherman also touched on the injustices that Indigenous women face due to colonial rule evident in the implementation of the Indian act, and the lack of attention paid to the hundreds of murdered and missing Indigenous women in Canada, with their voices seldom heard.

Khadija Warsame, Community Activist and Speaker for the New Canadians Centre Speaker's Bureau, spoke about her flee from the harsh political environment of Somalia with her two kids and pregnant condition, giving birth on the way during her remarkable journey through Kenya, Tanzania, and Malawi, to be eventually sponsored by five Peterborough women, bringing her to where she is today. Khadija's story is an inspiring story of determination, faith, and representing the strength within women.

International Women's Day continues to celebrate the historical significance of women's struggles while addressing the disadvantages that women still face, within a context of social inclusiveness and a promotion of peace over all.