FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

FIRSTONTARIO CREDIT UNION TAKES A LEADERSHIP ROLE IN THE FIGHT AGAINST POVERTY

Hamilton, ON, November 14, 2013 – For the fight against poverty and to help improve the lives of women and their communities globally, FirstOntario Credit Union is committing $50,000 over five years to Co-operative Development Foundation (CDF) of Canada’s Build a Better World Campaign.

Having seen first-hand how a contribution such as this can make a difference, Kelly McGiffin, CEO, FirstOntario Credit Union, after a recent trip to Cambodia with CDF, expanded his vision of making a difference. “It is our responsibility not only as a business, but as a credit union to make a difference wherever we can,” says Mr. McGiffin, “we are proud to support this program and the great work it does to improve the lives of women and their communities.”

Over the past five years, FirstOntario has invested locally in programs that support women and economic development such as, Micro Lending in Hamilton and Niagara, as well as their participation in the Canadian Co-operative Association (CCA) Women’s Mentorship program, sponsoring Credit Union Leaders from countries such as the Philippines and Kenya providing learning opportunities that support the co-operative principles. “Credit Unions of all sizes have so willingly supported our campaign and we are delighted that FirstOntario Credit Union is participating in such a meaningful way. They have actively been involved in our international work through the CCA Women’s Mentorship Program and the CDF Study Tour. With their support, the lives of hundreds of thousands of the world's poorest people will be improved.” says Julie Breuer, CDF’s Director of Fundraising and Operations.

This donation is in tandem with the inaugural gathering of the Global Women’s Leadership Network (WOCCU) to establish a Credit Union Women’s Leadership Network hosted by FirstOntario Credit Union. “A key goal of our Corporate Social Responsibility strategy is Women’s Leadership and Economic well-being,” said Carey Smith, Board Chair for FirstOntario Credit Union, “Through this donation FirstOntario is proud to be a part of the activities supported by the Cooperative Development Foundation.”
Who is CDF:
Money raised through the Build a Better World Campaign is used to support the international development work of the Canadian Co-operative Association (CCA) – CDF’s international development partner. For more than 50 years, CCA has been helping to establish and support co-operatives and credit unions in some of the poorest areas of the world. On average, the lives of some 2 million people are touched each year by CCA’s work.

The Build a Better World Campaign seeks to raise $12 million in support of international co-operative development. The campaign was inspired in part by the theme for the United Nations International Year of Co-operatives, and by the growing need to address poverty in the developing world. The Co-operative Development Foundation has worked in partnership with the Canadian Co-operative Association (CCA) for several decades, raising money for CCA's co-operative development activities.

About FirstOntario Credit Union
In business since 1939, FirstOntario Credit Union has more than $3.7 billion in funds under management, serves over 90,000 Members and offers a full suite of banking products including daily banking, mortgages, lines of credit, loans and investments. FirstOntario operates 23 full-service branches serving 13 communities across the Hamilton, Halton, Niagara, Haldimand/Norfolk and Oxford regions and Membership at FirstOntario is open to anyone. FirstOntario is a proud advocate of the communities we serve and supports many important community organizations. FirstOntario is a founding sponsor for Hive Hamilton, and supports Co-operative Young Leaders (CYL) and youth at risk through Soupfest. FirstOntario also supports Habitat for Humanity Niagara, Community Care St. Catharines and Thorold and Out of the Cold Niagara. As well, FirstOntario offers a scholastic bursary program and a Micro Lending Program in the Hamilton and Niagara regions. For more information please visit: www.FirstOntario.com.

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