

Credit unions have come a long way in Ireland and Northern Ireland and continue to be a key provider of financial services for millions across the island of Ireland. But the early beginnings must not be forgotten, ‘the how and the why’, the tireless work of the volunteers who came together to bring about access to financial services for so many people in their respective communities and industries’.

<p>WHO are we?</p> <p>The ILCU International Development Foundation Ltd (ILCU Foundation) was set up the ILCU in the early 1980s to help others in developing countries – to give something back. We are a registered charity. Our work is focused on providing financial and technical support to help develop strong, secure and sustainable credit union movements.</p>	<p>HOW do we do it?</p> <p>Credit unions make a voluntary contribution to us on an annual basis on behalf of their members. This is our core funding and allows us to provide direct support to credit union movements in our partner countries. Our core funding also acts as a leverage when applying for external funding from governments - for every €2 received from credit unions we leverage almost €1 from external funding.</p>
<p>WHAT do we do?</p> <p>We use the expertise and skills within the Irish credit union movement and share this knowledge with movements in developing and low income countries. Both the American and Canadian credit union movements provided support and advice to the pioneers who established the Irish credit union movement in the late 1950s. The ILCU Foundation want to share what we have been doing for generations with credit union movements in low-income and developing countries.</p>	<p>WHY do we do it?</p> <p>A credit union is a financial cooperative. Our work is all about cooperation among cooperatives – one of the credit union principles. The credit union movement transformed the landscape on the island of Ireland. It provided financial access to savings and loans for people who previously were underserved or denied because of their low incomes. We want to replicate this in some of the poorest countries in the world – people helping people.</p>

Regardless of the continent, country or culture – the credit union ethos remains the same the world over.

We are asking you to support the credit union movement and to allow us **to help others in the same way Irish credit union movement benefited from getting help from others**.

Ask yourself the following: why was your own credit union set up, what was it like for people in your community at that time, how does your credit union continue to help the people living and working in your common bond? Now, ask yourself this: what if the credit union was never established in your community?



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