

Internship Program

Program Review

December 2005



IICRD's APPROACH

The International Institute for Child Rights and Development (IICRD) is a Canadian leader in community-based, national, regional and international applications of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC). Our CRC applications provide a unique "culturally grounded" approach to children's rights that build on children's natural resiliency (strengths) as well as the strengths of families, communities and culture. In this way, our approach effectively reaches the most vulnerable children and youth, especially indigenous children, children affected by HIV/AIDS, and children who are victims of disasters & trafficking. IICRD uses this approach to directly support communities, to influence systems that affect children, and to introduce innovative ideas to breathe life into the spirit and letter of the CRC.

IICRD AND YPI

For over seven consecutive years, IICRD has furthered its reach through Young Professionals International, funded

by the Department of Foreign Affairs Canada. YPI is a significant component of IICRD's work in the priority area of children's rights education for professionals to protect and further rights for all children, especially the most vulnerable. The YPI project allows IICRD to train young professionals (YPs) on children's rights before they leave for their international placement, and support international partner organizations in the implementation of culturally appropriate and sustainable rights-based

One of IICRD's four priority areas for young professionals (YPs) is working with Children at Risk – children affected by HIV/AIDS, children who are victims of sexual exploitation, children who are affected by war and disasters, and children who are vulnerable to violence.

approaches that promote children's rights through local governance, direct programming, training, and research.

Over 50 YPs have been given their first career related international experience through

YOUNG PROFESSIONALS INTERNATIONAL PLACEMENTS ARE FUNDED BY THE DEPARTMENT OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS CANADA AND IS A COMPONENT OF THE CAREER FOCUS PROGRAM OF THE GOVERNMENT OF CANADA'S YOUTH EMPLOYMENT STRATEGY.



Erin Hetherington, 2002-2003: Investigacion y Educacion Popular Autogestiva AC (IEPAC), Mexico

IICRD since 1998. They have worked in Bangladesh, China, India, Indonesia, Malawi, Mexico, Slovenia, South Africa, Thailand, and Venezuela. The partners to whom we send YPs are ones that IICRD has worked with in the past and share our vision and approach to children's rights. Pre-departure, YPs receive

IICRD has sent over 50 young professionals to overseas placements over the past 7 years.

extensive training in IICRD's unique approach to children's rights so that their research, education, and capacity building in the field reflect our values.

MEASURING OUR IMPACT

IICRD has initiated a project review and interviewed all willing past young professionals. We held 15 in-depth

interviews with young professional alumni from almost every placement year.

We asked our young professionals the following questions:

- AS A YOUNG CANADIAN, WHAT IMPACT THEY BELIEVE THEY HAD ON THE LOCAL COMMUNITY, THE ORGANIZATION THEY WERE SENT TO, AND ON WIDER SYSTEMS DURING THE COURSE OF THEIR WORK.
- WHAT IMPACT THE YPI PLACEMENTS HAD ON THEM PROFESSIONALLY AND PERSONALLY?
- WHAT THEY ARE DOING NOW IN THEIR CAREER?
- WHAT FEEDBACK DO THEY HAVE FOR THE PROGRAM?

Read on to find out what we discovered!!



International Institute for Child Rights and Development (IICRD)
Centre for Global Studies,
University of Victoria

For more information, visit our website at: www.iicrd.org

Creating a Culture of Children's Rights:

IMPACT ON CHILDREN, COMMUNITY, LOCAL ORGANIZATIONS & SYSTEMS.



Michele Cook and Carole Luny, Cross-border project - Save the Children, Bangkok, Thailand, 2001.

IICRD has arranged many different types of placements for YPs, thus, the impact of our YPs has been felt in a variety of areas. A common theme with all placements is their participation in a movement to create a culture of children's rights. All YPs learn to understand the CRC & how it can be used effectively to benefit children, especially the most vulnerable, within various cultural contexts. This understanding permeates their research, their efforts at building capacity in communities, and their approach to child rights education.

CREATING A CULTURE WITH CHILDREN

YPs felt they had the most significant impact during their placement when they established direct relationships with children & youth in the community. Many are still in touch with the people they met during their stay overseas. **Janine Fernandes-Hayden** worked in a foster care home in South Africa strongly impacting the lives of these children. One of the most memorable projects **Andrew Wilcock** worked on was when he worked directly with Roma children & communities, teaching them how to use disposable cameras to capture their daily lives.

"HAVING TWO TEACHERS HAS BEEN VERY BENEFICIAL TO THE STUDENTS INsofar AS WE WERE ABLE TO DO MORE DIFFICULT ACTIVITIES THAT REQUIRED MORE PLANNING."

*Kathleen Smith,
Centro de Atención Multiple Cibuatián.*

CREATING A CULTURE WITH COMMUNITY

One of the most significant ways that our YPs can have an impact is by reaching out to the community to help create a culture of children's rights. **Sarah Lalonde** helped to organize a conference bringing together Annu young people with the few Annu elders who could speak their indigenous language and dance their traditional dances. **Emily McKee** helped to co-ordinate workshops on domestic violence, the role of indigenous women & girls in decision-making processes. She also documented the importance of community-run schools in preserving language, culture, and identity for indigenous peoples in Thailand. **Jamie Smulders** worked on the complex issues of supporting children and families

involved in the sex trade with a focus on participation. **Karla Gonzalez** was involved in community work in El Pinar and el Naha, working with children to strengthen their cultural identity.

CREATING A CULTURE WITH ORGANIZATIONS

YPs support our international partner organizations to implement culturally appropriate and sustainable child rights-based approaches in their programming, training and research. **Marnella Dragila** was honoured when a report she wrote during her placement, "Article 12 in Practice: A review of Child Participation in UNICEF Country Programmes in the East Asia and Pacific Region (EAPR)" was cited extensively in another UNICEF report, "Young People in the Media" written by Elissa Shuey. **Anka Raskin** conducted a participatory evaluation of a center that provides vocational training to rural children. **Jamie Smulders** helped Empower staff prepare

their presentation at the 2004 World AIDS conference in Bangkok.

INNOVATIVE IDEAS AND GOOD PRACTICE

YPs also play a strong role in promoting good practice & innovative ideas. **Sarah Van Borek** worked with vulnerable youth creating a documentary video exploring children & culture as catalysts for change. **Christine Nash** assisted in facilitating children's workshops for training on how to conduct research!! **Helen Woldemichael** researched work that organizations had undertaken to address human rights violations in Southeast Asia & how children's rights were included in these initiatives. **Maggie Childe** wrote a policy paper on rights-based approaches to the situation of children in emergencies.

"THE MOST REWARDING PART OF MY EXPERIENCE WAS WATCHING THE YOUTH I WORKED WITH CHANGE. I DID A LOT OF CONFIDENCE-BUILDING WORK WITH THEM AND WAS SO PROUD TO SEE THEM BECOME YOUNG PEOPLE WHO COULD STAND UP AND REALLY CLAIM THEIR RIGHT TO BE HEALTHY."

Erin Hetherington

Faruque Hossain and friends, St. Martin's island, Bangladesh, 2004.



At a Glance...

WHO ARE THE YOUNG PROFESSIONALS, WHERE DID THEY GO & WHERE ARE THEY NOW?

Adriana Greenblatt	2001-2002: Investigacion y Educacion Popular Autogestiva AC, Merida, Mexico	
Adrienne Small	2001-2002: University of Zulia, Venezuela	City of Toronto social services, employment resource centre & has worked on a children's scholarship project.
Aisling Bondy	2002-2003: Melel Xojobal, San Cristobal Chiapas, Mexico	Law school at the University of Ottawa - one semester exchange to Chile - and will return to, will work at the Parkdale Community Legal Aid Clinic in Toronto, mostly on refugee and immigration law.
Alex Wright	2003-2004: Universidad del Zulia, Dept. Socio-antropologico, Venezuela	YMCA in Burlington - will go to University of Maastricht, Netherlands for an MA in conflict studies & human rights.
Amy Haysom	2002-2003: Inter Mountain Peoples Education and Culture in Thailand (IMPECT)	Youth Global Liaison at the Centre for Global Studies (University of Victoria) and Youth Consultant for Canadian Commission of UNESCO and teaching in Vancouver.
Andrew Wilcock	2004-2005: Education Research Institute, Slovenia	Applied to McMaster & University of Toronto Occupational Therapy programs. Is a support worker at a mental health clinic and is working for Ottawa-Carleton Lifeskills, evaluating one of their mentoring programs.
Anka Raskin	2003-2004: IICRD (Victoria, BC Canada)/Concern for Working Children, India	Social planner, City of Vancouver and contracting with IICRD.
Audrey Van Halder	1998-1999: Unicef, Mexico	Working at the Canadian consulate in Mexico.
Ben Crompton	2002-2003: IMPECT in Chiang Mai, Thailand	Continued on in Thailand, with a focus on his photography.
Cam Carruthers	1998-1999: Institute for Dispute Resolution	
Carole Lunny	2000-2001: Save the Children, Thailand	Community Engagement and Representation, BC Persons with AIDS Society, Vancouver.
Christie Nash	2004-2005: Concern for Working Children, India	Has just returned from her work in India.
Denise Wong	1998-1999: Save the Children, China	
Emilie Monnet	1998-1999: Wayuu Women's Network, Venezuela	
Emilie Paquin-Holmested	2004-2005: University of Zulia, Venezuela	Law school at McGill and applying for an international human rights internship - on the Rwandan tribunals, working on women's rights, or working at an international human rights court.
Emily Mckee	2003-2004: IMPEC, Thailand	
Erin Hetherington	2002-2003: Investigacion y Educacion Popular Autogestiva AC, Merida, Mexico	Program Assistant for Oxfam America in Boston for the last two years - currently applying to several Grad schools in public health, human rights and development, or international sustainable development.
Fadi Fadel	1998-1999: ECPAT	Working overseas.
Fiona Scanlan	1999-2000: Wayuu Women's Network, Venezuela	Boston-based NGO Partners in Health working in the area of HIV/AIDS.
Helen Woldemichael	2004-2005: Save the Children Alliance, Thailand	Working with a medical company that sets up psychological assessments for people for insurance purposes. She is looking into Masters programs at the moment and will start her MSW in 2006.
Isabella Sellar Voll	2001-2002: University of Zulia, Venezuela	Mennonite Central Committee - International Visitor Exchange Program Coordinator for Canada.
Jamie Smulders	2003-2004: EMPOWER Chiang Mai, Thailand	
Janine Fernandes-Hayden	1998-1999: Ministry of Welfare, S.Africa	BC Ministry of Education - Education Officer. Working on accountability contracts with school districts.
Jennifer Toth	2003-2004: Educational Resource Centre, Slovenia	United Way / Centraide Ottawa (UW/CO) in the Community Services Division.
Jocelyn Helland	2004-2005: Save the Children UK, Bangladesh	Project Manager with IICRD.
Julian Norris	UNESCO, Siberut, Indonesia	PhD in Rights of Passage at University of Calgary, Canada.
Kabita Chakraborty	2002-2003: Save the Children Alliance, US Regional Office, Thailand	PhD at the University of Queensland with Dr. Harriot Beazley, a specialist in street children in Asia.
Karla Gonzalez	2002-2003: Na Bolom; San Cristobal, Mexico	
Kathleen Smith	2003-2004: Centro de Atención Múltiple "Cihuatlán", Mexico	Applying to Concordia's Masters of Creative Arts for human development because she wants to work creatively with children who have disabilities.
Kathryn Ervine	2001-2002: Melel Xojobal, Mexico	Ph.D. at York University - working on a project of the Global Environment Facility & the World Bank on int'l environmental policymaking & its impact in Chiapas (with a community participation focus).
Kathy Kettler	Pauktuutit, Ottawa	
Kim Vradenburg	1998-1999: Malawi, Dept. of Psychology	Masters of Arts in School of Child and Youth Care, University of Victoria, Canada.
Maggie Childe	2003-2004: Save the Children, Bangkok, Thailand	Finance officer, CIBC - volunteers in the area of children's rights.
Marnelle Dragila	2002-2003: UNICEF, Thailand	Finished the Bar Admissions Course in Toronto and is doing a 10-month articling position at the largest specialized family law firm in Canada: Epstein Cole LLP. Also contracting with IICRD.
Mary Walter	2001-2002: IEPACC, Mexico	
Meredith Preston	2000-2001: IMPECT, Thailand	Gender advisor to the UN Unit for Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration in Sudan.
Monica Mamchur	2001-2002: La Universidad Del Zulia, Venezuela	Registered Nurse in a medical surgical unit at a hospital in Hawaii. She is trying to work herself into women and children's health or community health.
Richard Paulsen	1999-2000: UNESCO, Siberut, Indonesia	UNESCO in Jakarta, Indonesia.
Ruth Amanual	2004-2005: Centro de Atención Múltiple, Mexico	
Sandrina De Finney	1994: Pauktuutit, Ottawa	
Sarah Lalonde	2001-2002: University of Zulia, Venezuela	Undergrad international development, University of Calgary; exchange to Peru; in talks to be featured in a documentary on aboriginal children who grew up on-reserve going to the city to go to university.
Sarah Van Borek	2003-2004: Child & Youth Care Agency for Development/Children's Resource Centre, South Africa	Master of Fine Arts in Film & TV Production, University of Cape Town's Institute for Film & New Media - building towards a TV series by/for marginalized youth, bridging between Canada & South Africa.
Simon Garret	2004-2005: IMPECT, Thailand	Master's in "Peace and Conflict Studies" at Australia National University - with 5 months study in Norway.
Vicki Pratt	2001-2002: Investigacion y Educacion Popular Autogestiva AC, Mexico	Business owner in Lethbridge Alberta designing goal setting/time management products (software).

Achievement Highlights:

WHAT THE YOUNG PROFESSIONALS CONTRIBUTED DURING THEIR PLACEMENT.

Aisling Bondy was involved with Espacio Comunitario Infantil (ECI), in Mexico, teaching "A Culture for Peace" to local youth. **Alex Wright** became involved in cultural and linguistic revitalization activities and produced child rights education materials, including a book, *In Search of Annu* that links the daily lives of children in the Laguna de Sinamaica, Venezuela, to concepts in the CRC. **Amy Haysom** documented and presented issues relating to birth registration and facilitated a Child Rights Seminar for hill tribe children (IMPECT) in Thailand. **Andrew Wilcock** analyzed and reported on data in Slovenia from the Cross-Cultural Study on the Rights of the Child, worked directly with Roma children and participated in Youth Parliaments focusing on "Social Integra-



Sandrina De Finney, Pauktuutit, Ottawa, 1994.

tion and the Expansion of the European Union". **Ben Crompton** carried out interviews in northern Thailand with Hill tribe communities for IICRD that was showcased in the Children and Environment book project and wrote an intern handbook for IMPECT. **Denise Wong**, while in China, wrote: *Understanding Child Rights and Culture: A Survey of Minority Child Rearing Practices in South-western China through a Child Rights Framework*. **Emily Paquin-Holmested** travelled throughout Venezuela documenting indigenous children's games that is currently being published by IICRD, University of Zulia and UNICEF. **Erin Hetherington** built, from the ground up, a peer-to-peer adolescent health project in Mexico and developed a manual in Spanish on topics relevant to health and youth. **Isabella Sellar Voll** helped to plan a conference that brought kids together for a day from other water communities like Laguna de Sinamaica in Venezuela. **Jennifer Toth** collaborated with UNICEF on work with youth groups, and doing an assessment of the relationship between child rights NGOs and government in Slovenia. **Jocelyn Helland** worked with Save the Children UK in Bangladesh to ensure that a child rights focus was present in the government's Poverty Reduction Strategy. **Kabita Chakraborty** attended the 3rd East Asia Pacific Children and



2005-2006 Young Professionals currently in the field.

Young People's Forum in Seoul and produced the proceedings available at www.seapanet.net/external/special/Forum3/Forum3.htm. **Sandrina De Finney** worked in Pauktuutit, Canada and wrote a publication called, *Children and Youth of the Arctic*. **Sarah Van Borek** worked in South Africa to organize a benefit concert for a youth cultural group; create a coloring storybook project with daycare kids; & create a documentary film on the role of music in the children's movement in South Africa. **Simon Garret** assisted IMPECT in Thailand and the IKAP Network organize a conference on "The Impact of Globalization, Regionalism and Nationalism on Minority People in SE Asia". **Ruth Amanual** worked in Mexico at a school for children with

CURRENTLY IN THE FIELD:

SHARLENE RAMKISSOON
SAVE THE CHILDREN, BANGLADESH

YONA NESTEL
SAVE THE CHILDREN, BANGKOK

SAMANTHA ASH
EDUCATION RESEARCH INSTITUTE,
SLOVENIA

SARAH LOUNSBURY
CENTRO DE ATENCION MULTIPLE
CIHUALTAN, MEXICO

SONJA CRAIK
CHILDREN'S RESOURCE CENTRE,
SOUTH AFRICA

JENNIFER SCOTT (CANADA CORPS)
CONCERN FOR WORKING CHILDREN,
INDIA

special needs. Her main activities were working with the children in the school, raising awareness and funds (over \$17,000) and creating: www.camcihuatlan.org.

DRAWING ON HER ART, MUSIC AND MEDIA TALENT...

Sarah Van Borek tells her story: "September 2003, I found myself in South Africa, on a 6-month placement with YPI and IICRD. From living and working hands-on with vulnerable children and youth in a semi-rural township (facilitating creative empowerment projects including a mini festival and colouring storybook), to then living in an

urban metropolis and writing/editing a documentary video exploring a children and culture as catalysts of change, my multi-faceted experience challenged me in my view of the world and my role in it.

Encountering a delightful concoction of situations, from member of a grassroots Spoken Word movement to community video NGO affiliates; from playing in a

9-piece Afro-fusion band to studying dance with a Congolese superstar; making friends with people from hip-hop DJ's to government officials, I established myself a second home. It wasn't long before I learned that the cultural sectors of Canada and South Africa have a special agreement promoting media co-productions between the two countries. The "how's

to the "what's I had been visioning began to materialize at every turn.

Surrounded by such meaningful relationships, both personally and professionally, following the internship's completion, the logical next step forward became clear: to pursue post-graduate studies...in South Africa."

That is exactly what she has done...

Professional Impact on the YPI Alumni

ARE THEY FURTHER AHEAD IN THEIR CAREER BECAUSE OF THEIR YPI EXPERIENCE?

IMPACT ON ALUMNI

Every alumni interviewed, no matter what the huge challenges, described their experience as being very ‘powerful’ and, without prompting, all except one offered a long explanation of why they would highly recommend the program to others or why they would do it all over again in a heartbeat!

90% of interviewees are working professionally in sectors that are directly related to global issues, social justice, or children’s rights. The few that were not working professionally in these fields, were either volunteering in these fields,

or were finding ways to promote children’s rights in their work in some way. For example, one alumnus who has her own home-based business working in time management software, has a vision to develop goal-setting/visioning tools for young school-aged children.

DID IT HELP THEM GET WHERE THEY ARE?

Individuals reported a huge professional impact on them in general. For example, four interviewees extended their placements, are still working in the country of their placement, or plan to return to the location of their original placement.

The majority of interviewees voluntarily said that the placement has both directly and indirectly helped them to get where they are in their career! Many said they would definitely not have gotten the very good jobs in their field that they did when they returned without that experience. For some, rather surprisingly, the placement introduced them to a completely new area that they are now passionate about continuing as a career. For the vast majority of interviewees, the experience allowed them to bridge into areas related to their academic background, or it allowed them to specialize in an area in their field.

“My time overseas as a IICRD young professional changed my life; it put me on a course where I was able to make important contacts and understand the operating systems of NGOs. I know that my future consists of working in aiding street children’s participation and promoting their rights...and this is because of my experience as a young professional. It is truly a great program, worth every penny that is put into it.”

Kabita Chakraborty

DISCOVERING NEW WAYS TO WORK WITH CHILDREN...

The YPI experience had a huge impact on Kathleen Smith whose placement was in Mexico, working with a special education school in Barra de Navidad called Centro de Atencion Multiple. Being the first real experience she ever working with children with disabilities, the impact was profound. During her time there, she says she was changed forever. She saw the powerful connection these children had with creative arts. There was one particularly salient moment for her: “We were putting together a Christmas pageant for the school and one girl who was to be in the pageant didn’t want to participate at first. She was a shy little girl with Down Syndrome and, like every

other year, she just sat in the corner and watched everything going on around her. This Christmas, we were teaching the children a dance. One day, this girl’s mother and asked to speak to me. She told me that, incredibly, her daughter had been practicing the dance at home and today, she was going to ask to audition. This was a huge step for her daughter and she wanted to make sure the teacher understood fully how amazing this was. When I had the girl rehearse the dance, she did very well and I welcomed her into the dance. With each rehearsal, this little girl continued to blossom in her dance! When pageant night finally arrived, this shy little girl was the best dancer

out of all of the children!! This was such a momentous accomplishment for her and it really spoke to me of the incredible connection between artistic expression and working with disabled children. I was so excited that I extended my

work in Mexico after my term. I have recently returned to Canada with the intention of entering into Concordia’s Masters program at the Centre for the Arts and Human Development. I intend to pursue this as my career path.”



Kathleen Smith and the children of Centro de Atencion Multiple, 2003-2004

Our learning...

IMPACT OF YPI ON IICRD

Participants support and strengthen IICRD's relationships with our International partner organizations by incorporating Canadian values of human rights and citizenship and through their research and documentations skills into child rights programming.

IICRD has also maintained a strong YP alumni. IICRD draws on this network for training and providing support to new YPs. IICRD also brings alumni in to work directly with the organization on projects. **Ben Crompton** carried out interviews in Northern Thailand with Hill tribe communities for IICRD that was showcased in the Children and Environment book project. **Marnelle Dragila** completed a literature review for IICRD's "Meaningful Child

Participation in BC Family Court Processes" project. **Anka Raskin** is a research assistance for IICRD's Growing Up in Cities Canada project & Child Rights Education for Professionals project. **Jamie Smulders**, **Julian Norris**, **Fadi Fadel** and **Fiona Scanlan** have also worked with IICRD. **Jocelyn Helland** has become a core member of the IICRD team and is working on several projects.

IICRD CONTINUES TO LEARN...

Interviewees commended IICRD on the approach we take to the placements and noted how much they valued IICRD's extensive pre-departure children's rights and cross-cultural training. Others recognized IICRD for our wide-range of partnerships – we are partners with very small grassroots

organizations working in remote locations, right through to the largest of the international non-profit organizations. This allows us to have many different types of placements, including very unique placements with smaller NGOs that other organizations can't offer as easily. One of our original YP alumnus, who had been placed with a small NGO partner, has been working in the international development field for several years now and spoke a great length about the values and perspective that she gained during her placement that she continues to bring to her work to this day. She strongly encouraged IICRD to maintain this unique approach to the YPI Program.

IICRD has been successful in placing very enthusiastic young professionals. Some mentioned that their high level of enthusiasm to "do a good job" and high expectations posed a significant challenge for them when they first arrived. For some this remained a challenge for them throughout their placement. Others, however, found creative ways of channeling that energy into great projects. It is our observation that those interviewees who overcame these initial challenges had the most profound personal and professional placements! Thus, IICRD-



Ruth Amanuel & Emilia, Centro de Atencion Multiple, 2005.

will continue to provide YP's with opportunities to embrace their own learning while providing ongoing support and attention to safety.

Among many other things, this project gives opportunities to young Canadians who have just completed their undergraduate degree and are unemployed or under-employed. The placements allow Young Professionals to learn valuable skills and gain experience that allows them to dramatically increase their competitiveness in the career job-market.

IICRD would like to thank Foreign Affairs Canada for their ongoing support through the Young Professionals International project!

Merideth Preston with Karen child at Manee Loi safe camp. IMPECT, Thailand, 1999



Foreign Affairs Canada and
International Trade Canada

Affaires étrangères Canada et
Commerce international Canada

Young Professionals International placements are funded by the department of Foreign Affairs Canada and is a component of the Career Focus Program of the Government of Canada's Youth Employment Strategy. <http://www.dfait-maeci.gc.ca/yipi-jpi>

The opinions and interpretations expressed herein are those of IICRD and do not necessarily represent those of the Government of Canada."



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