

ON-GOING EVENT(S)

1. Coaching training for human resource managers from big MIFs;
2. The implementation of CoC continues;
3. The implementation of the “Dual System” (Pilot phase : by SBFIS, AMIR and RICEM
4. PMT trainings in progress and PMS database under construction;
5. Preparations of the upcoming 17th ACCOSCA Congress;
6. Partnership with the University of Technology and Arts of Byumba (UTAB);
7. Introduction of MIS and audit shared services

Rwanda to host the 17th ACCOSCA Congress

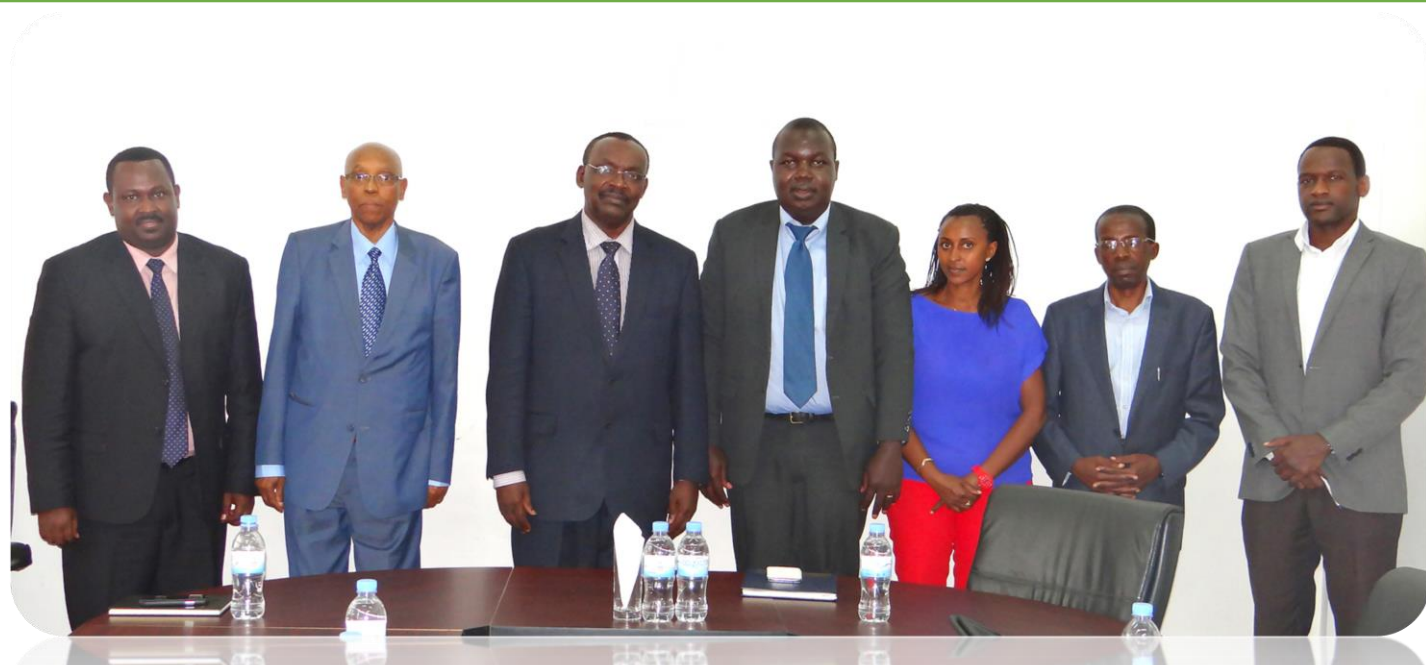
Rwanda through AMIR embraces the golden opportunity to host the 17th ACCOSCA congress in October this year. This was communicated by the ACCOSCA management in Kenya early this year. The African Confederation of Cooperative Savings & Credit Associations, ACCOSCA in its acronym, is a Non-Governmental, Pan African confederation of national associations of savings and credit cooperatives societies. ACCOSCA opened its doors in1968 and is currently being governed by domicile laws and ACCOSCA constitution in Kenya. The ACCOSCA General Assembly is held annually and is rotated within the region. It ensures that the activities of ACCOSCA remain relevant in meeting the challenges faced by Africa. It is in this respect that a bold step was taken to approve the Confederation revitalization program at Malawi General assembly meeting in 2007

Currently ACCOSCA has developed programs aimed at improving social-economic needs of Africa through saving and credit unions, partnering with various government bodies, development agencies and research institution so as to contribute towards mitigating challenges facing Africa in the twenty first century aimed at effectively supporting members, working on bringing services to the people not generally served by the formal sector. AMIR was appointed as the Hosting Institution in the first technical meeting held early February at the Rwanda Cooperative Agency (RCA); though the hosting institution is supposed to play the key and leading role in all the related preparations, NCCR (the National Cooperatives Confederation of Rwanda) will also be playing a supportive role to ensure that the process of the event preparations is being implemented efficiently.

In the interview, Mr. George OMBADO the Chief executive Officer of ACCOSCA highlighted that hosting this Summit will be a kind of a “Returning point” for Rwandans: Rwandans will learn much from advanced countries as regards to financial inclusion and access – “... we are expecting to have many people across Africa and across the world, from better countries, to come and share their experience...” He emphasized.

- UPCOMING EVENTS
- ITORERO for MFIs and SACCOs
 - The 17th ACCOSCA Congress

NEWS OF THE MONTH



Hon. Minister François KANIMBA poses with the ACOSCA Local Organizing Team during the briefing on the preparations of the 17th ACOSCA Congress: from left – Peter RWEMA/AMIR; Damien MUGABO/RCA; Hon. Minister/MINICOM; George OMBADO/ACCOSCA; Angel TUMUKUNDE/MINICOM; Jean de Dieu TWIZERE/NCCR and Patrick HAGUMIMANA from MINICOM



Financial Education is playing a tremendous role in financially shaping lives of the population

Building an Inclusive Financial Sector in Rwanda (BIFSIR) is a UNDP/UNCDF funded project since 2010 and revised in 2013. The revised program will scale up entrepreneurial capacity building, financial education and financial linkages to target groups of youth and women. This program aims at contributing to poverty reduction by promoting financial inclusion. Its specific objectives is to contribute to capacity building of the various microfinance sector players with a view of supporting the development of sustainable, quality and diversified financial services that are accessible to the less advantaged Rwandans. In 2013, AMIR through this project conducted trainings of above 500 teachers from primary and secondary schools. As a result of the training impact, 571 savings accounts have been opened in MFIs and SACCOs and more than Rwf 27millions have been deposited as savings. 127 small and medium enterprises have been created by youth. In 2015, AMIR trained 184 managers of SACCOs members of AMIR in Financial Education using the materials developed by World Bank. (*source: Responsible and Inclusive Finance Department/ AMIR*)

Amandine DUSABE, is the manager/ UMUTUZO SACCO in Northern Province – Musanze district, she attended the training of trainers on financial education. She told the media that the training has impacted positively on their lives”financially”. She revealed that before the training they had 3,214 accounts but, after the training, thanks to the techniques of marketing and savings mobilization developed after the training, the number of the accounts raised to 3,327.



The neighboring SACCO (ABIHUTA Kinigi) also has recorded some achievements thanks to this training. For Saving Accounts: before (4,561) – after (4,934); for women: before (1,468) – after (1,526) ; for youth: before (447) – after (545). (*Source: the management*).

UNCDF recommended the work done so far, and appreciated the strategies employed. “...And am happy AMIR has meant its targets and sometimes exceeding them. Therefore I recommend that AMIR keeps up the courage for we both have a lot to do for the SACCOs and financial inclusion for community at large...” this was highlighted by UNCDF delegation in a field visit.

EDITORIAL CORNER

Protecting the microfinance sector’s reputation: AMIR – partners’ crusade

Since its establishment in 2007, AMIR has been striving for supporting its members: MFIs and SACCOs, to become more professional and sustainable institutions. AMIR has been not only supported by its members, but also particularly, AMIR has been technically and financially supported by stakeholders and various donors, to attain its mission effectively.

In the crusade, of becoming a strong and efficient organization that contributes to the development of microfinance industry through the promotion of transparent management system in MFIs, innovative and market led financial services and products; AMIR employed strategies that jointly and consultatively developed by members and partners.

In one way or another, the implementation of programmatic activities related to CoC (code of conduct) and CPP (client protection principles): Training of trainers, disseminating different and relevant IEC (information – education – communication) materials, developing monitoring tools, country status report, CoC surveys, and coaching sessions; proved to be a strategic approach to build and cement the relationship between MFIs/ SACCOs and their clients; so as to protect the sector’s reputation and create a friendly and sustainable work environment across the sector.

One of the key partners, to mention in this regard is “SEEP”. This is a global network of practitioner organizations dedicated to combating poverty through promoting inclusive markets and financial systems. The SEEP Network supports AMIR, as the implementing partner, in planning, developing and providing services to members, and as well as in monitoring programmatic activities. With support from SEEP, AMIR developed a Code of Conduct and it was disseminated across the microfinance sector. The AMIR’s strategic plan was also reviewed to reflect new and current realities, thanks to the advisory – technical – financial support from SEEP.

Protecting the reputation of the sector in which we operate, should be “mutual responsibility” for partners and AMIR members. AMIR needs to double its efforts in coaching to ensure that the CoC is being implemented effectively. Thus, AMIR should focus on a few, practical factors that can be easily monitored, such as prevention of over-indebtedness, and mechanisms for complaints handling.