

January 2013

Management Report



Highlights of the monthly activities of the ASSOCIATION OF ASIAN CONFEDERATION OF CREDIT UNIONS



27 credit union experts from 11 countries (Bangladesh, Bhutan, Cambodia, India, Indonesia, Mongolia, Myanmar, Nepal, Philippines, Sri Lanka, and Thailand)

Federations Plans to Pilot AgriFinance in CUs

Although access to financial services may prove crucial, credit unions need to fill the needs of the farmer-members to improve their lives.

The Regional workshop on AgriFinance was successfully completed on January 26-30 in Bangkok, Thailand. It was attended by 27 credit union experts from 11 countries (Bangladesh, Bhutan, Cambodia, India, Indonesia, Mongolia, Myanmar, Nepal, Philippines, Sri Lanka, and Thailand). The workshop introduced the credit union business solution no. 20- Credit Union AgriFinance Methodology. Written in their action plan, the participants indicated piloting the program to select credit unions in their respective countries.

As observed, farmers rely on agriculture for their livelihoods, which are growing more uncertain due to the threats of climate change, the recent food and financial crises, and falling investments in agriculture. All are being affected by human-made climate change. Farmers are the worst sufferers. The seasons, the time to plant, the time to harvest are changing. Much of the indigenous knowledge of farmers is no longer always applicable.



It seems that every year, they lose their yield to floods or storms. The marginal farmers' become most vulnerable. They become the poorest of the poor.

Although access to financial services may prove crucial, credit unions need to fill the needs of the farmer-members to improve their lives. Financial access alone may not be sufficient to alleviate farmers from poverty.

ACCU recognizes that credit unions

provide loans to farmers. However, there is a need for credit unions to be more active in making use of the available technical expertise of specialized agencies to address watershed development, livelihood promotions, organic farming, agriculture extension services, environmental impact assessments, training and capacity building, education, skills development and financial literacy among farmers. Almost one third of the world's populations are members of farming households in Asia.



Sri Lankan Study Visit to Thailand

ACCU welcomed 26 leaders of credit unions from Sri Lanka on January 15 – 16 on their study visit to Thailand. The group visited ACCU office, FSCT, CULT and Klongchan Credit Union. The leaders are representatives from the member credit unions of SANASA Federation.

Expansion of CUMI Outreach of CCS Eyed

With the outreach of more than 90,000 individuals, the Central Cooperative Society (CCS) now considers the expansion of the microfinance program targeting at least 120,000 poor families as its beneficiaries. ACCU CEO Ranjith Hettiarachchi, on his visit to Myanmar on January 20-23, discussed with the officers of CCS the strategies that will be employed to create impact on the lives of people accessing the financial services of credit cooperatives.

ACCU is cooperating with Ayani, Inclusive Financial Sector Consultants to access UNCDF (stands for United Nations Capital Development Fund). Ayani is an international finance management and consulting company incorporated in the Netherlands, with offices in Africa (South Africa, Zimbabwe), the Middle East (Egypt) and Asia (the Philippines).

CCS, the apex body for cooperatives in Myanmar is an Affiliate member of ACCU since 2011.



EXPLORING POSSIBILITIES:

Top Photo: ACCU CEO Ranjith Hettiarachchi and Ayani representative (2nd from left) speaking to CCS CEO U Kyaw Thein and U Mil Lwin at CCS' office in Yangon. Photo below: Fact finding and consultations with the leaders and members of credit cooperatives.



Move to Organize Federation of SCU in Laos Starts

Consultation with the leaders of savings and credit unions (SCUs) in Laos is underway. Supported by Rabobank Foundation, the project on the Savings and Credit Union Development in Laos (SACUDIL) targets to organize a secondary level organization for credit unions. Consequently, the project office will be assumed by the federation.

In the recent visit to Laos on January 7 and 8, Mr. Ranjith Hettiarachchi explained the functions of the secondary organization to SCU leaders. The meeting with Bank of Lao PDR's (BoL) Director General of the MF Supervision Department Dr. Akhom Praseuth and his Deputy Ms. Kaesone Manivong explored the legal framework in which the federation can be registered. Registration under the association law and the cooperative law are the two options for the SCU federation.



SCUs SERVING LOCAL COMMUNITIES:

Top & Left Photo below: Officers of Dept. of Planning & Investment in Luang Prabhang and Directors of SCUs at the consultation meeting. Below right Photo: ACCU CEO presenting a token to Dr. Akhom Praseuth, Director General of the Microfinance Supervision Department of Bank of Lao PDR.

WELCOME TO NEW SUPPORTER MEMBERS!

With the support of the Chief Executive of Select Credit Union, Mr. Mark Worthington, seven credit unions from Australia joined as supporter members. Fire Brigades Employees Credit Union Ltd. and Warwick Credit Union Ltd. joined in January. There are now 13 supporter members from Australia. ACCU has 59 supporter members from 13 countries as of January 2013. The supporter members help ACCU promoting and strengthening credit unions in countries where credit unions are on its initial stage.

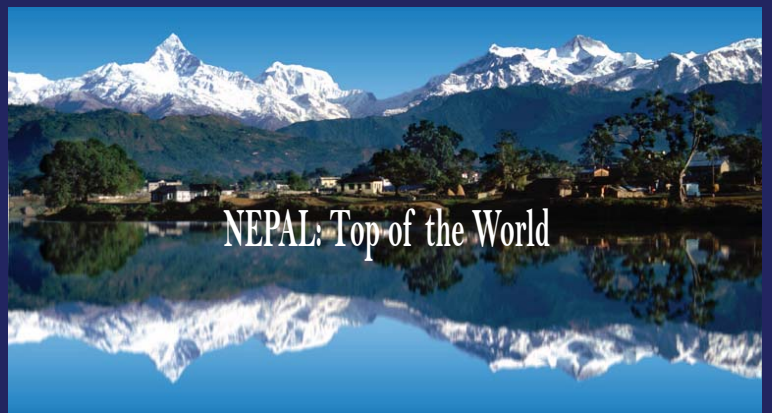
Registration is Open

Asian Credit Union Forum 2013

Soaltee Crowne Plaza, Kathmandu, Nepal

- September 9 to 11 - Pre-Forum Workshops: CEO, HRD, Women & Youth
- September 12 - Credit Union Visits
- September 13 to 14 - Asian Credit Union Forum
- September 15 - Annual General Meeting

US\$ 100 Discount when you register by March 31, 2013



NEPAL: Top of the World

Host: Nepal Federation of Savings & Credit Cooperatives Ltd. (NEFSCUN)