

# Strathmore Project

—Providing Accreditation For CU Leaders



The first SWAMI participants pose for photo at the completion of the tier one accreditation program.

The first SWAMI (Strathmore World Council African Management Institute) took place in Nairobi, Kenya in November of 2004, thanks to financial support from CUNA Mutual Group (CMG) Foundation and the United States Agency for International Development (USAID). The SWAMI model of intensive training for board members and managers in sound leadership and safe financial management is designed to ensure that credit unions continue to promote effective service to their members.

World Council of Credit Unions, Inc. (WOCCU) and Strathmore University are the primary collaborators; Strathmore's specialization in accounting and information technology complements WOCCU's focus on instruction materials for the training institute.

This three-tiered training approach marks a departure from the format of prior training programs developed by WOCCU and Strathmore. In creating the current system, organizers considered the feedback of past participants, the need to focus on the training of board members and managers, and the success of the tiered approach as used at credit union training schools in the United States. "It is very exciting to see so many students from all over Africa participating in the institute this year," said Anne Cochran, CEO of the Louisiana Credit Union League (LCUL). "It has been a resounding success so far, with terrific evaluations of the courses and teachers. I strongly believe that in the near future the institute will come to represent a hallmark of Savings and Credit Cooperatives (SACCO) professionalism."

Credit union board members and managers are responsible for completing courses in safe financial management and accounting, including WOCCU's PEARLS monitoring system, good governance, marketing and information technology.

Twenty-six SACCO managers and management staff attended the full six day training and twenty-four SACCO board members joined for the last two days of the institute. The majority of the students were from Nairobi, Kenya; others were from various parts of Kenya, the Seychelles and South Africa.

Upon successful completion of their assignments, students will proceed to tier two in July, 2005. After completing all three tiers, SACCO managers and board members will be awarded the Certified SACCO Professional designation. The first SWAMI class will graduate in November, 2005.

Funds provided by CMG and USAID enabled the additional involvement of credit union volunteers from Louisiana and Pennsylvania. The efforts of Cochran, her staff, and Rick Myxter, vice president of the Pennsylvania Credit Union Association (PCUA), partner to Kenyan credit



## COUNTRY INDICATORS

National Capital: Nairobi  
Government Type: Republic  
Area: Total 582,650 sq km  
Population: 31,639,091 (July 2003 est.)  
Inflation Rate: 1.9% (2002 est.)  
Currency: Shilling  
Exchange Rate: 76.5 Shillings/US\$1  
GDP: \$32.89 Billion (2002 est.)  
GDP per Capita: US\$1,100 (2002 est.)  
Source: IMF/CIA World Factbook 2004, World Bank

## CREDIT UNION INDICATORS

Credit Unions: 2,500  
Members: 1,800,000  
Savings: US\$985,040,518  
Loans: US\$906,237,277  
WOCCU Statistical Report 2003

unions, have added valuable input to the design of the institute, curriculum and marketing materials.

Thanks to the support of the American Heritage Federal Credit Union, the PCUA, and a coordinated effort between the Southeast Regional Credit Union School and the LCUL, nine Kenyan students were awarded partial scholarships to attend the three tier training program. One South African student also received a full scholarship for the three tiers.

It is the expectation that this training will become a model credit union development program to be replicated around the world. World Council anticipates that the training agenda and structure established at SWAMI will complement the development of training programs in Ecuador and elsewhere. 

—by Catherine Ford

Technical Officer—Training & Research, WOCCU