

## Volunteer Report

### Assignment Information:

<b>Volunteer Name:</b>	<b>Lynda D. Swenson</b>
<b>Host Organization:</b>	<b>ACWEC OMIO COOPERATIVE SOCIETY LTD</b>
<b>Assignment: UG13</b>	<b>Cooperative principles of leadership and managements</b>
<b>Dates of Assignment:</b>	<b>August 20 – September 9, 2014</b>
<b>Days worked ACWEC OMIO:</b>	<b>20 DAYS</b>

### Objectives:

The objective of this technical skill in leadership and management will help set a new direction or vision for the association to follow. This will properly direct people/resources in the association according to principles and values established. The technical support in the areas of leadership and management should therefore emphasize the following topics, among others:

- Principles of cooperative leadership and management
- A brief about principles of cooperative business development
- Duties and responsibilities of leaders, and Leadership in action - Improving decision making.
- Role and functions of the Board
- Conducting effective meetings
- Conflict resolution
- Group cohesion dynamics

### Deliverables from the Scope of Work

- 60 leaders, 9 from the cooperative and 51 from the RPOs are training on leadership and management
- Leadership and management training guidelines developed
- Debriefing with USAID and in country after assignment group presentations
- Field trip report and expense report
- Volunteer feedback and Host contribution

### Assess your success in fulfilling the deliverables.

Business Plan was updated with information and statistics through actual 2013 with projections from 2014 to 2018.

Almost 100 Cluster Officers, Lead Farmers and others attend two-day workshop on Cooperative management and Leadership.

A Training of Trainers (TOT) was held with 27 participants; training modules were developed that can be used in monthly meetings of the Cluster Groups to re-enforce the management and leadership principles.

2-day training with the Board of Directors as well as a ¾ day debriefing/training.

Meeting with District Council CFO – Charles Challe Omor 077 432 3466

Debriefing with CRS Kampala and US Aid.

Recommendations for ACWEC OMIO Cooperative:  
(These were given to the BOD on Saturday the 6<sup>th</sup> of September.)

1. Require all members with loans to repay starting immediately. This must be the highest priority for the Cooperative until the UDB obligation is fully satisfied.
2. Create a list of borrowers from highest to lowest and work on the largest borrowers first.
3. Elect strong Board of Directors with expertise. The Treasurer is not capable of the position.
4. Analyze each new project (FTF and IFDC as examples) to determine profitability and cash flow.
5. Actively recruit new members to increase productive capacity.
6. Pricing of services provided by the Cooperative should reflect a differential between members and non-members. This will encourage membership.
7. Search for reliable markets within and outside of Uganda.
8. Practice good leadership and transparency in all activities by following the constitutions of the organizations.
9. Record keeping must be up to date and accurate and available to the members.
10. Present the Auditor's Report to the membership at the General Assembly.
11. The Chairwoman must begin to share information and delegate responsibility. She is termed out; to run again, there must be a change to the bylaws.

**Number of people Assisted – see Participant Listing**

- a) Through formal training
- b) Through direct technical assistance (Do not double count) – BOD/Officers
- c) Out of these above, number of host staffs - 15
- d) Training/assistance by subject/field:

Subject/Topic/field	Males	Females	Total
Cooperative Management and Leadership	69	23	92
ACWEC OMIO Business Plan	10	4	14
<b>Total</b>	<b>&gt;70%</b>	<b>&lt; 30%</b>	

**Gender**

- a) What gender roles did you recognize in your host community? Did these roles play a part in your assignment? How?

Men were in the majority of the Cluster Training. Most of the voluntary verbal contributions were from males. Breaking into smaller groups improved the situation.

The BOD has 5 female members but 3 of those are retired teachers who are extremely quiet and do not have a strong knowledge of business and finance. The Chairwoman is very strong and tends to dominate any meeting that she is in. She is “in charge” of everything. Private conversations with several of the BOD men indicate that the Chairwoman runs the Cooperative as “a family business.” She is related to several of the other Board members.

- b) How might CRS or the host organization improve opportunities for the women in this host or host community?

I don't know. There is a General Assembly on 30 December 2014. According to the bylaws of the Cooperative, BOD may only serve 2 terms which total 4 years. Many of the BOD (including the Chairwoman) are "termed out" unless an amendment to the bylaws is passed at the beginning of the meeting.

**Value of volunteer contribution in \$: \$ 1,225**

- a. Hours volunteer spent preparing for assignment: 20+
- b. Estimated value of all material contributions volunteer contributed to host during assignment: Markers, pens, candy, Accountants' graph papers

**Host Profile Data:**

Did you obtain any data that supplements or corrects the data in the existing host information as detailed in the SOW? Please list it.

**Current Debt Obligations:**

In June, 2014 Acwec Omio received a loan of 497,500,000 Ush from UDB (Ugandan Development Bank). Each member of the Board of Directors guaranteed personally. 4% Loan Commitment fee and 10% annual interest rate with repayment schedule of 70% of principal plus 8 months interest due 2/2015 and the remaining 30% plus 2 months interest due 4/2015.

There are two facilities:

**Equator Seeds**

**37,000,000**

Farmers received seeds with a repayment date of September 2014; most of the Acwec Omio farmers took part in this.

**Direct Cash Loans**

**460,500,000**

380 farmers took part in this program which gave cash to the farmer. Loans varied in size. Farmers pledged land and buildings as collateral. There was a 4% loan fee. 10% annual interest rate with repayment schedule of 70% of principal plus 8 months interest due 2/2015 and the remaining 30% plus 2 months interest due 4/2015.

The Cooperative also received funding from the U.S. African Development Fund (USADF) to help build a storage warehouse. The grant from USADF was Ush 48 million and is approximately 2/3 of the total cost of the storage facility. The remaining Ush 24 million was supplied by Acwec Omio in the form of brick, sand, land, and additional capital provided by the local community. The warehouse is now completed.

**Potential Future Obligations**

Feed the Future is suggesting that the Cooperative pay 5,000,000 shillings for a mobile maize sheller; then FtF will give them a stationary maize cleaner. Maize is the low on the production of products in 2013 and was the least profitable.

IFDC (International Fertilizer Development Council) is suggesting that the Cooperative pay 18,000,000 shillings and IFDC will do the following:

1. Finish warehouse floor
2. Create a drying courtyard
3. 760 tarps to go to members (This will be hard as there are 1,500 "active" producers versus 2,500 subsistence farmers)
4. Training on post harvest handling of oil seed crops (SNV did on sunflower and soya several years ago)
5. Funds for training mobilization to include supplies, fuel for Ag Ext Officer

IFDC says the value of this work is 100 million.

**Recommendations for CRS:**

1. Arrive Lira Town in afternoon; in my experience, this is a 5+ hour trip.
2. Fairway Hotel is good; be careful of the renovation areas.
3. Margaritha Palace Hotel is good; staff is responsive. Restaurant is good but more expensive than others in Lira Town.
4. Walking to Lira Town is easy and interesting.
5. Thank you for my business cards!

Thanks for George and Maria for the wonderful assignment.