



US Overseas Cooperative Development Council

SUMMER Newsletter

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The Research Group has had a busy and productive summer of conferences, presentations of research results, a Cooperative Learning Event in Malawi, managing on-going research projects and kicking off our research in the next "What Difference do Cooperatives Make" countries.

Cooperative Development Program

The Research Group is thrilled to announce we have been awarded and signed a 5-year Cooperative Agreement with USAID to embark on an exciting next phase of international cooperative development research and learning under the Cooperative Development Program (CDP). The RG Cooperative Research, Education, and Dissemination (CRED) project will advance support for cooperatives and cooperative development through the dissemination of research results in various ways and at the same time continue to build a robust center for learning and collaboration for its member CDOs and beyond that also serves as a cooperative development resource platform. We are excited to begin this new work, to strengthen our many partnerships and to build new ones.

What Difference do Cooperatives Make?

The recently released research report, "What Difference Do Cooperatives Make: Poland" is now available online (<https://goo.gl/PH9qe5>). A companion report, "Cooperative Development in Poland: A Legacy of USAID Assistance" discusses the continuing legacy of USAID supported cooperative development work in Poland in the 1990s. The results show that cooperatives in Poland are resilient and the legacy of the work of USAID and the OCDC member Cooperative Development organizations in the 1990's is strong. The research also found that while people associate cooperatives with economic benefits, they often stay in cooperatives for the combined social and economic benefits. The RG presented the research results at a release event in Krakow, Poland, to USAID staff, and at the ICA research conference in the Netherlands in July.



83%

of Polish coop members believe that membership positively affected their economic position.



Earlier this year the Research Group began the "What Difference Do Cooperatives Make" research in the second country, Kenya, with the research firm, Dalberg Research Kenya doing the survey work. Quantitative and qualitative data Comparable to that from Poland will be collected in Kenya by the end of the year with published reports expected in early 2019. In addition to Kenya, the Research Group has been working to identify a research partner in the Philippines. These countries and a fourth Latin American country will accompany the Poland report.

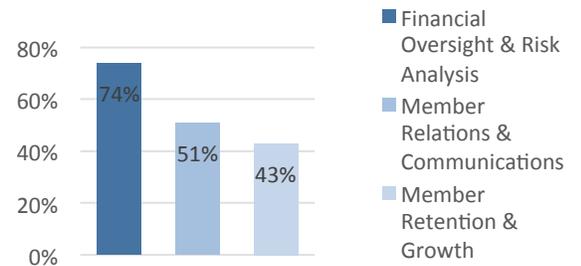
The International Cooperative Research Group (RG) is a division working within OCDC to design and implement rigorous research into the impact & effectiveness of cooperatives in international development and share the knowledge with various stakeholders to enhance impact.

Cooperative Board Governance in Developing Countries:

Taking a deeper dive into the Governance data collected last year, the RG advanced the collaborative Governance research initiative by commissioning an analysis of the effectiveness of the governance assessment tools. The research includes the classification of three stages of development (1: creation/startup; 2: direction/establishment; 3: delegation/institution), stage-specific surveys were completed in 35 cooperatives in 5 different countries, for a total of 170 board members and 419 coop members. To test the validity of the instruments, predictive answers were used. The Stage 2 and 3 questionnaires were predictive, thus valid for measuring governance needs. The instrument for Stage 1 cooperatives will be recalibrated.

The results show that the questionnaire is likely too advanced for Stage 1 cooperatives and should be adapted to better measure the governance needs of young and less developed cooperatives. The analysis of the results shows that the top Governance needs, which translated across all three development stages, were Financial oversight and Risk Analysis, Member Relations and Communications, Member Retention and Growth, Board Processes and Responsibilities and Adding Paid Staff.

Top Recommendations



CDP Learning Event in Ethiopia:

In August, the RG participated in an excellent ACIDI VOCA-hosted Cooperative Development Program learning event in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. The event brought together cooperative leaders from many countries, implementing organizations, apex organizations, and donors to discuss lessons learned, accomplishments, and findings from the CDP grant nearing completion. The RG presented on Market Inclusion and the Enhancing Development through Cooperatives data. Additional sessions included USAID's mapping project, CLARITY, monitoring and evaluation practices, and technologies to improve cooperative management. A highlight of the event was visiting three cooperatives that participated in the CDP.



Updates and Upcoming Events

"What difference do Cooperatives Make: Poland" Release & Reception

**Thursday, October 18th
5-7pm**

The Research Group invites you to help us celebrate the release of the "What Difference do Cooperatives Make: Poland" report with a happy hour and short presentation of some fascinating outcomes.

Learning Event Coming Soon

To culminate the previous round of CDP grants and in kick-off of new CDP funding, the RG is hosting a learning event for CDO implementing partners. The event will encourage cross-implementer networking and learning, discuss new technologies and management techniques with external experts, and present various cooperative development approaches and topical issues. The 2018 Cooperative Research Seminar will be part of the three-day learning event. More details and formal invitation to come.

#CoopFest2018

**October 6 & 7
National Mall**

Join OCDC & the Research Group in celebrating cooperatives at #CoopFest2018. Stop by the OCDC booth on October 6 & 7th to learn about the Cooperative Development Program, the CDP countries, and a chance to win CDP themed prizes!