



Real commitment and improvement in consumer protection compliance has made an impact

By the end of August 2019, AMIR organized a study tour for all chief executive officers from the supported MFIs (MFIs that are under TA on CPPs compliance) to go to Lagos/Nigeria and learn from Grooming Centre and LAPO microfinance banks. From the tour, AMIR has seen a good level of commitment and improvement in consumer protection compliance and best practices in the supported MFIs.

For AMIR to continue to professionalize the sector, a team of 6 SPM/CP local consultants accompanied by 2 AMIR officials and 1 staff from The SEEP Network went to Nairobi Kenya for a study tour in MUSONI microfinance <https://musoni.co.ke>, the only SMART certified MFI in East Africa. **Musoni Microfinance** is certified in Consumer Protection Principles by Smart Campaign since March 2019.

The objective of the study tour was to learn the approach and process applied by Musoni Kenya, to become the first Smart Certified institution in East Africa.

The study tour involved:

1. Observation of consumer protection in action at Musoni offices.
2. Discussions with the Chief Innovation Officer, in charge of SPM and the CP Certification Project, branch management, contact center staff, individual lending client and group lending clients.
3. A boardroom session with: (a) consultants that supported Musoni through the certification process, (b) The rating agency that audited Musoni for certification.

Lessons learned from the tour

The lessons learned are grouped into 4 different categories.

1. Lessons on Internal Preparation
2. Lessons from the Musoni Visit
3. Lessons on Internal Preparation
4. Lessons from External Consultant

A link to the full report will be shared in the bulletin of December

Do you work in microfinance? By definition, your organization is doing "good", right?

CERISE Qualified Auditor

Now day's new actors and technologies are changing the way inclusive finance is done, Investors no longer take it for granted that "doing microfinance" means "doing good." Now more than ever, socially-minded MFIs need to make good on their intentions to bring positive change: to stand out, to stay strong and hold true to their mission.

The SPI4 tool equips with the knowledge and tools needed to measure and manage social performance. Practice using the CERISE-SPI4 social audit tool, master the intricacies of pricing products responsibly and learn how to apply the Universal Standards for Social Performance Management and Client Protection Principles in your organization.

From 27th -29th November/2019, AMIR supported by The SEEP Network and MasterCard foundation organized a professional Social Performance Indicators 4 (SPI4) Auditor training for interested sector practitioners and players (consultants, MFIs staff, and other interested parties). 33 practitioners benefited this training.

Upcoming events and activities

- 13TH January 2020 CEOs meeting
- Awareness campaign on AMIR customer care initiative
- Isuku Iwacu project awareness campaign and launch events in Ngoma, Ruhango, Kicukiro, Nyabihu, Nyanza and Nyarugenge district
- The SG2020 and the Regional Networks Summit in Durban, South Africa/ Please register for the conference <https://manentres.org/Pricing-SG2020> and fill out the survey to let The SEEP Network know about the topics you would like to discuss during the RNS: <http://seep-agenda-topics-for-the-regional-network-summit-ngoma.com/s3/>.

Facilitating learning exchanges on CPPs and SMP between partner MFIs and non-partners, the sustainability plan

On 8th November 2019, just after the tour of local consultants to Musoni, AMIR organized another local learning event for 25 managers of U-SACCOs representing 25 districts of Rwanda. This is in line with AMIR's role in capacity building of its member MFIs and SACCOs.

25 managers who attended came from 25 U-SACCOs, these are deans who represents other U-SACCO managers at District level. This was initiated again as a sustainability plan of the CPP and responsible finance initiative of which AMIR in collaboration with SEEP Network and MasterCard Foundation are implementing since 2016. This initiative/ Project is aimed at scaling up the application of consumer protection practices in RWANDA. 7 Limited companies have been receiving technical assistance under this project; Responsible Finance through Local Leadership and Learning (RFL3) program, so that they align their policies and practices with industry-accepted consumer protection principles.

As a sustainability plan, AMIR has decided to introduce 30 SPM module institution at district level. These models will be assisted and supported to comply with SPM and CPP international standards starting from Jan 2020. In line with this concept, deans will be responsible to establish their institutions as learning centers and also SACCOs from their districts will be coming to learn from dean's SACCO.

Goshen Finance as AMIR member has been part of the process and has shown a good level of improving practices in compliance with Consumer Protection principles and SPM in general, these include; Transparency, Fair and respectful of clients, privacy of clients data, CRB usage, prevention of over-indebtedness and Complaint resolution mechanism. Goshen Finance has endorsed consumer protection principles.

Given the fact that, GOSHEN Finance was willing to share its experience with managers of U- SAACOS and NON-USACCOs, a study tour of one day was organized for 30 District deans but unfortunately, only 25 managed to attend.

Learning outputs

- AMIR to continue sensitization of responsible finance concept and extend it to local government and regulatory body (BNR)
- AMIR to organize training on SPM for deans and CentraBank staff
- Goshen has accepted to provided technical support to whoever in the team that is committed to improve the practices
- Transparency and time taken in loan disbursement were highlighted as two most things that needs to be worked on.
- Documentation was given the priority when it comes to the implimention of the learning outputs.
- Deans were committed to go and read all their policies and internal documents, start adjusting where possible, just to make sure that they make a difference in service delivery.
- Communication channels for complaint and feedback resolution were to be put in place. All clients/ Members should be informed about the available channels.
- Respecting clients will be the heart of the service delivery
- Loan officers and other SACCO staff will be trained on how to prevent a client from being over-indebted

Other November top stories

- Hundreds of managers gathered to set strategies sustaining sector achievements

Read more: <http://www.amir.org.rw/hundreds-of-managers-gathered-to-set-strategies-sustaining-sector-achievements/>

- We want to be great, a Rwandan economist-politician urges microfinance practitioners.

Read more: <http://www.amir.org.rw/we-want-to-be-great-a-rwandan-economist-politician-urges-micro-finance-practitioners/>

Kindly read our bulletin for the months of April, May, June, July and August, Sep and Oct 2019 through the link below:

<http://www.amir.org.rw/media-center/news/>