

## WOMEN'S MENTORSHIP PROGRAM BENEFITS TO PARTICIPANTS, CREDIT UNIONS AND COMMUNITIES

### BENEFITS TO PARTICIPANTS

The program empowers women to be agents of change by improving their leadership and managerial skills, build their self-confidence and increase professional knowledge and skills. The program also connects women managers with a Canadian mentor and colleagues from savings and credit co-operatives in Africa & Asia. The Women's Mentorship Program invests in women for the return of a lifetime.

### BENEFITS TO COMMUNITIES

Women alumnae have attributed many impacts and changes in their communities because of participation in the mentorship program. Noted below are some of the changes which have been made:

- more children (including girls) attending school (due to new loan products "school flexi loans")
- more community members (including women) having access to credit (e.g. group loans for women)
- improved standard of living
- social responsibility initiatives in communities (e.g. loans for unemployed youth, sponsoring a school or community events)
- improved awareness of gender sensitivity/women's leadership issues

### BENEFITS TO FINANCIAL CO-OPERATIVE SECTOR

Program alumnae and financial co-operative Boards of Directors have identified the following as a result of participating in the WMP:

- Increased membership
- Improved liquidity/profitability
- Improved reputation of credit union in local community
- Reduced loan delinquency
- Expanded operations/new branches
- Professionalization of operations
- New products and services for members
- Increased job performance, leadership skills, and self-esteem of returning women managers

### TESTIMONIALS

**Alumna (Uganda)** - *"My exposure to the CCA Women's Mentorship Program helped increase my self confidence and gave me fresh energy to manage the SACCO and let members trust the SACCO more than before. We realized that women leaders can effectively run SACCOs.*

**Alumna (Ghana)** - *"The mentorship program has increased my confidence ... I can now speak and express my thoughts and opinions freely without fear of being intimidated".*

**Alumna (Philippines)** - *"We belong to different countries and have different practices but we are all working to improve the management of our credit unions. We share the same quest and that bridges the gap between us. I have so many lessons learned to take home - such as loan processing, collection and enforcing policies and procedures as well as strategic planning. My world got a lot smaller with this experience - if we close our eyes and share our thoughts, we are just one."*

**Canadian host (from Alberta)** – *“we would recommend this opportunity to other credit unions ... The Women’s Mentorship Program was a great experience for our credit union ... We learned more about ourselves as individuals and about our organization than we could ever have anticipated. Organizing our guest’s visit gave us a true appreciation for the talent within our organization and an opportunity for our staff to feel good about what they do and have a new perspective on their roles. The Program also sparked interest in newer staff to learn more about how we actively engage in the 7 co-op principles. It was a great experience for our staff who hosted our guest in their home and our directors who invited her to their farms, homes, and businesses. The credit union gained several new friendships, an understanding of other cultures, a renewed appreciation for what we have, a feeling of contribution and helping others, as well as how diverse and large the global co-operative movement is.”*