

Operating Principles

Democratic Structure

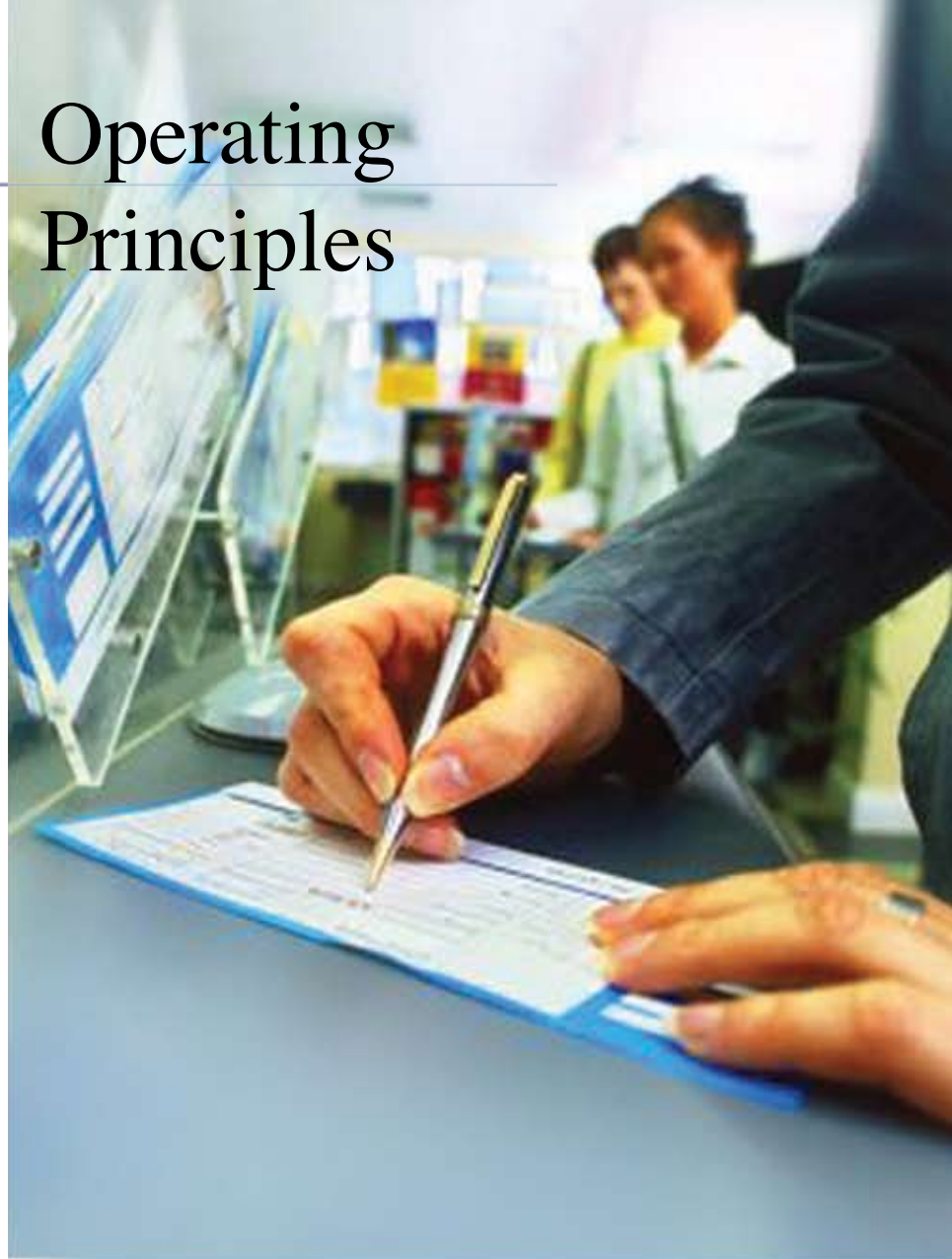
- Open & Voluntary Membership
- Democratic Control
- Non-Discrimination

Service to Members

- Distribution to Members
- Building Financial Stability
- Service to Members

Social Goals

- On-Going Education
- Cooperation Among Cooperatives
- Social Responsibility



The International Credit Union Operating Principles are founded in the philosophy of cooperation and its central values of equality, equity and mutual self-help. Recognizing the varied practices in the implementation of credit union philosophy around the world, at the heart of these principles is the concept of human development and the brotherhood of man expressed through people working together to achieve a better life for themselves and their community.

Democratic Structure

Open and Voluntary Membership

Membership in a credit union is voluntary and open to all within the accepted common bond of association that can make use of its services and are willing to accept the corresponding responsibilities.

Democratic Control

Credit union members enjoy equal rights to vote (one member, one vote) and participate in decisions affecting the credit union, without regard to the amount of savings or deposits or the volume of business. Voting in credit union support organizations or associations may be proportional or representational, in keeping with democratic principles. The credit union is autonomous, within the framework of law and regulation, recognizing the credit union as a cooperative enterprise serving and controlled by its members.

Non-Discrimination

Credit unions are non-discriminatory on all grounds, including but not limited to race, orientation, nationality, sex, religion and politics.

Service to Members

Distribution to Members

To encourage thrift through savings and thus to provide loans and other services, a fair rate of interest is paid on savings and deposits, within the capability of the credit union.

The surplus arising out of the operations of the credit union after covering the cost of finance, operating costs, provisions for loan losses and ensuring appropriate capital reserve levels, belongs to and benefits all members with no member or group of members benefiting to the detriment of others. This surplus may be distributed among members in proportion to their transactions with the credit union, as dividends on shares or directed to improved or additional services required by the members.

Building Financial Stability

A prime concern of the credit union is to build the financial strength, including adequate reserves and internal controls that will ensure continued service to membership.

Service to Members

Credit union services are directed to improve the economic and social well-being of all members.

Social Goals

On-Going Education

Credit unions actively promote the education of their members, officers and employees, along with the public in general, in the economic, social, democratic and mutual self-help principles of credit unions. The promotion of thrift and the wise use of credit, as well as education on the rights and responsibilities of members, are essential to the dual social and economic character of credit unions in serving member needs.

Cooperation Among Cooperatives

In keeping with their philosophy and the pooling practices of cooperatives, credit unions within their capability actively cooperate with other credit unions, cooperatives and their associations at local, national and international levels in order to best serve the interests of their members and their communities.

Social Responsibility

Continuing the ideals and beliefs of cooperative pioneers, credit unions seek to bring about human and social development. Their vision of social justice extends both to the individual members and to the larger community in which they work and reside. The credit union ideal is to extend service to all who need and can use it. Every person is either a member or a potential member and appropriately part of the credit union sphere of interest and concern. Decisions should be taken with full regard for the interest of the broader community within which the credit union and its members reside.