Management Summary
Learning report Uganda 2005 – Capacity Development

This is the management summary of the 2005 evaluation report of the Capacity Development programme in Uganda. Since the start of IICD's capacity development programme, courses and seminars have been evaluated by participants. This collection of data, making an analysis of the results is done by IICD's local M&E partner. In June 2005 the results from the data analysis have been discussed in a focus group meeting for project owners and training partners. This resulted in an interesting exchange of knowledge and the sharing of recommendations. Both the data analysis and the recommendations from the focus group are described here.

Capacity development in Uganda

In Uganda a total number of fourteen projects - with a total of 60 centres up-country - are now in implementation in the education, good governance, health and livelihoods sectors. Since the start of the programme in 2000, IICD's project partners in Uganda have recognised capacity development as a precondition for the effective use of ICTs for development. Therefore different kinds of training activities have been organised, including Life-Long-Learning sessions, seminars and on-the-job trainings. IICD is working together with two National Training Partners, namely the Uganda Institute of Information and Communications Technology (UICT) and TechnoBrain, who organise most of the training sessions and seminars

How to evaluate Capacity Development?

In order to evaluate the satisfaction of the participants and the longer term impact, participants are regularly asked to fill in questionnaires. In the first instance, the participants are asked to fill in a questionnaire immediately after the course. Three to six months later another questionnaire is administered which investigates the longer term impact. The results are discussed during the semi-annual Focus Group Meeting, at which all project partners and training partners are present. Since 2003, 288 respondents filled in the first questionnaire at the end of a training session

which evaluated in total 15 courses. Sixty four participants filled in the second questionnaire months later. The reason for the difference in numbers can be found in looking at the difficulties encountered tracing the participants after some time had passed. Field researchers had to travel up-country to reach these participants. In addition 180 seminar participants filled in the questionnaires specifically designed for seminars.

Who are the participants?

From the analysis done we can see that most of the participants in courses and seminars are project leaders and team members, with only a small percentage being project users. In line with IICD's strategy, most training sessions are based on the train-the-trainer principle, whereby the team members are trained, and in their turn train the users of the project or colleagues in their organisation. This practice is reflected in the profile of the participants in general. Almost all of the participants have attained tertiary education and live in the capital city. Many respondents are between 21 and 30 years old, and the majority (75%) are men. Most participants refer to their household income in relation to other people in the country as average.

Impact after 3-6 months

The participants' level of satisfaction with the content of the training, the trainers and the facilities is very high. Almost all participants indicate that they achieved their goals by participating in the course. Looking at the levels of impact, after three to six months most participants (84%) indicate that they are more aware, and more than half (68%) indicate that they feel empowered. The good score on empowerment is especially encouraging, given the short time frame. It indicates high levels of self-confidence, ability to help others and increased level of skills.

Fifty-three percent of the participants indicate that they experience a positive economic impact which is a surprisingly good score. It indicates that the need for external help to deal with ICT issues in the projects is diminished and more problems can be solved by the staff members themselves. Whether this is actually the case may be a topic for further investigation.

The positive organisational impact is quite low (37%), which can be attributed to the fact that participants find it difficult to transfer the knowledge and skills to their workplace.

Knowledge transfer to the workplace
During the focus group meeting held in Kampala in June 2005, the following question was discussed: *"How can we ensure that we translate lessons learnt during training sessions into practice in the workplace?"* This question was raised after the participants saw the organisational impact score of 37%. First the project leaders analysed the problem by acknowledging certain factors hindering knowledge transfer, like the fear of technology, the lack of confidence and lack of interest in ICTs. It was acknowledged that the culture does not encourage people to share acquired knowledge, since having knowledge ensures a higher status. Regarding the role of the training partners, it was mentioned that sometimes they make ICTs sound very complicated.

How these difficulties can be overcome was the next topic of discussion during the Focus Group Meeting, which can be summarized as follows: establish a policy on how the project will be run and the knowledge will be transferred.

Some of the practical tips shared in the group include:
1) Invest in developing the skills of more than one member of the organisation in order to spread the knowledge;
2) Ensure the training meets a specific project-related need, which makes it easier to translate the acquired skills into practice;
3) Encourage teamwork and the sharing of knowledge more actively; and,
4) Explain that ICT is a tool to ease the workload and make it more efficient, in order to eliminate fear and resistance. The last remark concerned the trainers: they too need to be sensitised of the possible fear of ICT and address this during their courses.

The focus group meeting raised awareness on the issue of transferring knowledge from theory to practice. Now it is up to the project teams themselves to implement these recommendations. Meanwhile, the capacity development programme will continuously be monitored and evaluated in the same way as before.

More information
For information about IICD and Monitoring & Evaluation, visit www.iicd.org/evaluation or contact us at information@iicd.org. The online M&E system can be viewed at http://www.survey.iicd.org.

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