

Summary Learning Report 2009

Uganda Country Programme

This report is a summary of the learning reports on the IICD Uganda Country Programme in 2009. Summaries are published on the IICD website to show the work of our local project partners and the results that these partners and IICD have achieved. Important to point out is that learning reports are meant for learning, hence they focus on the outcomes and impact of the projects as well as their successes and challenges, rather than checking on project progress or money spent, which is done via progress reports.

Evaluations are based on questionnaires for different stakeholders. The evaluation includes project teams (reflecting on IICD's support), participants of trainings (reflecting on capacity development) and end users (reflecting on the projects they take part in). Data from these questionnaires is analysed by a local M&E partner, who also facilitates a subsequent Focus Group discussion (FGD) with the partners who implement the different projects. The discussions in this FGD result in more qualitative data from the projects (what is actually happening on the ground) as well as exchange of experiences (successes and challenges), and lessons learned for partners and IICD.

The evaluation report below gives an overview of both the data collected and the discussions that followed in the Focus Groups. Though sensitive information from specific partners has been removed to maintain a trust relationship with and between partners, M&E reports are an honest representation of the processes and lessons concerning the Country Programme. In 2009, activities of the Country Programme were in three sectors namely: Livelihoods, Health and Governance.

Background

Five hundred ninety (593) questionnaires were collected for evaluation in 2009. Data was collected from project End Users in all sectors.

LIVELIHOODS SECTOR

The Livelihood sector comprised of two projects namely;

- Mubende Light Senior Secondary School ICT Centre that provides training to SMEs and farmers on entrepreneurship, value addition etc through the use of ICT.
- Rural Information System (RIS) project to enable the sending and receiving of timely, accurate and adequate market information to/ from stakeholders in agricultural commodities' marketing.

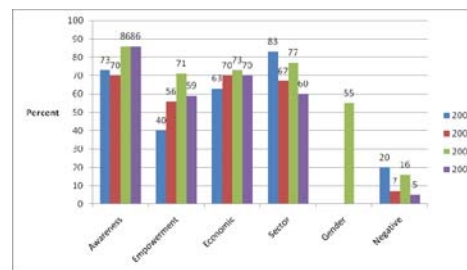
A total of 299 questionnaires were filled in 2009 for the livelihoods sector. The majority of the respondents (70%) were working in the cooperative sector, 58% were farmers, 61% have primary and

tertiary education, 79% live in the rural area, 75% are between 21-50 years of age, 65% are male and 25% have a below average income mainly because they are rural subsistence farmers.

Satisfaction and Impact

Satisfaction with all services of the projects was very high for most of the services with majority scoring between 70 -90%. Only suitability of the facilities for women and other disadvantaged groups scored 58%.

Impact Livelihoods Sector 2005-2009



There was high positive impact on the end users and the community as a result of the projects. The highest impact was realised on awareness (82%) and least impact was realised on gender but also this was above average (52%). A look into the scores of individual statements showed that the relatively low impact on gender was mainly due to the low score for "The role of women in the community has changed for the better."

Recommendations

Respondents also gave a number of suggestions meant to improve their projects which included:

- More education and training covering mainly: films on modern farming methods, visiting model farms, production of cinema;
- ICT services e.g. "the provision of computers, printers photocopiers and other related components like internet to serve as information source;
- Extend the project to deeper rural areas (Mubende Light S.S.S.).

GOVERNANCE SECTOR

In the governance sector, data was collected only from the district net project which covers Mbarara, Kayunga, Mbale and Lira districts. The project aims to provide transparency at the local government level and to improve the provision of public information through the implementation of ICT. The project started in 2001 and from 2006 to-date it went into independent continuation.

In 2009, almost 4 years after the project went into independent continuation, an evaluation was done to assess the impact and achievements of this project within the various districts. This was a unique opportunity to look back with all actors involved at what had been achieved in their districts through the use of ICT for improved service delivery as well as what challenges they experience today with using ICT to make their daily work more effective.

A total of 147 end users responded to the questionnaire. Of these, 99% work in local government, 58% were technical and support staff, 54% was female, 70% were between 21 to 40 years of age, 87% completed tertiary education, 65% have

an average income and 76% live in the provincial or district town.

Satisfaction and Impact

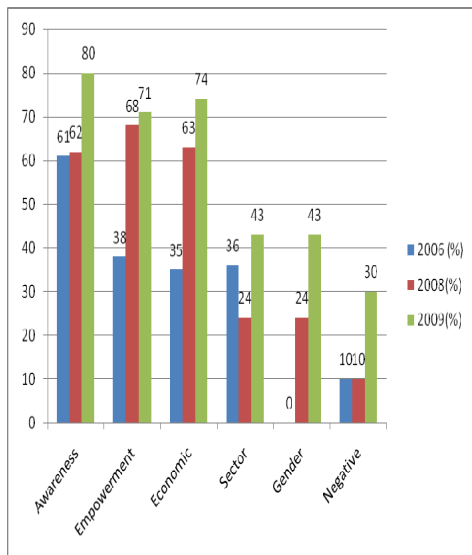
Seventy six percent (76%) indicated that they had achieved their goals by participating in the project. Most participants indicated that they have achieved their goals because they have become more efficient at work, have acquired skills and knowledge in ICT/IT, are able to access ICT services they never had access to before and learning about good governance.

In 2006, all aspects scored above 50% level of satisfaction with the highest level being attained by trainings and seminars. In 2007, no data was collected. In 2008, all aspects also scored above 50% and the highest score was for technical support. And most aspects scored higher than they did in 2006 except for trainings and seminars. In 2009, all scores declined except for costs of the information/service and access to information by mobile phone. Over all, the best performing year was 2008 but also all aspects in all the years scored above 50% satisfaction.

There was more impact particularly on awareness, empowerment and economy in 2009 compared to the previous years. Over years the indicator that did not perform well is sector impact. Looking into scores of individual statements for the sector indicator, those that contributed most to the low scores are "there is now less corruption (41% in 2008)" and "citizens can now let their voices be heard (42% in 2009)".

On a positive note, two of the statements measuring the project objectives scored high namely: "supports decentralisation effectively and access to infrastructure and connectivity has been improved in the governance sector (59% in 2008 and 62% in 2009)". But the other two statements – most crucial since they actually measure best how far the project objectives have been achieved- scored low in 2006 and 2008 namely: "timely generation of reports (37% and 48%) and the government is now more transparent (37% and 41%)".

Impact Governance Sector 2006-2009



Recommendations

Respondents made a number of suggestions both in the questionnaire and during the FG meeting meant to improve their projects which included:

- LAN and Internet connection (as a solution to lack of required infrastructure);
- computer training (as a solution to inadequate training);
- Extend the project to rural areas and other disadvantaged groups like women and the disabled.

HEALTH SECTOR

The health sector has three on ground projects namely:

- Uganda Catholic Medical Bureau (UCMB): use ICT to improve data management and use of information in the UCMB targeted health institutions for continuing medical education (CME) purposes;
- Uganda Martyrs University, Nkozi (UMU): use ICT to contribute to poverty alleviation by helping to improve health care delivery through CME;
- Health Child: use ICT to promote child health through the reduction of child illness and mortality.

The first two projects are in independent continuation since December 2007. But UMU was relaunched in 2009 with a planning workshop for a new phase of the project. The Health Child project started implementation in May 2007.

A total of 147 end users responded to the questionnaire. Of the 147 respondents, 59% were from CBOs, 40% were students and 21% technical staff, 96% had tertiary and secondary education, 53% were male, 45% were between 21- 30 years of age, 85% live in the rural area and 65% had an average income.



Mr. John Besiga using the computer

More than five years ago, it was extremely expensive for Mr. John Besiga, a District Councillor at Mbarara district to write proposals seeking aid for the persons with disability that he represents. But after the introduction of District Net, a rural ICT (Information and Communication Technology) project, with support from International Institute for Communication and Development (IICD), Mr. Besiga does not have to walk long distances nor pay any fare to find ICT facilities to conduct his work.

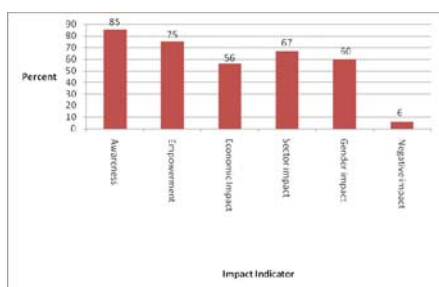
He is now able to access all services from the district headquarter premises much faster. "It was very expensive for me in the past. Being a person with disability (blind) it meant I would pay a fare and other expenses for both myself and my guide to look for Internet in town (about five kilometres from the district headquarters)," says Mr. Besiga, who depends entirely on Internet for his work especially emailing his proposals to donors seeking funds for his constituents. Mr. Besiga and other civil servants working with Mbarara local government have testified they can now have their work done faster with improved communication.

Satisfaction and Impact

89% said they have achieved their goals by participating in the project. End users were most satisfied with suitability of the facilities for women & other disadvantaged groups and the quality of the information/service, as well as with the technical support. On the other hand they were least satisfied with manuals and handouts, but this has probably not been provided by the projects. However a number of people recommended to actually provide hand-outs.



Impact Health Sector 2009



All impact indicators scored above 50% impact. The highest impact was awareness (85%) and the least impact was on economic impact (56%). In addition, negative impact was negligible (6%). A look into impact per gender shows that although men realised the most impact, the disparity with that achieved by women was not big except for negative impact.

Recommendations

Respondents made a number of suggestions both in the questionnaire and during the FG meant to improve their projects which included:

- Management should plan to buy more computers;
- Carry out regular backups;
- Purchase genuine anti-virus software by consulting people who know about genuine sources of software;
- Seek help from I-network on genuine software;
- Improve staff motivation (salary, trainings, housing allowance etc.) to retain staff;
- Think of changing to VSAT connection for more reliable internet/e-mail connection.

With the right tools, people in developing countries can considerably improve their livelihoods and quality of life. Better access to information and communication technology (ICT) is particularly vital in enabling them to achieve their goals. This is why the International Institute for Communication and Development (IICD) creates practical and sustainable solutions that connect people and enable them to benefit from ICT. As an independent not-for-profit foundation, we put knowledge, innovation and finance to work with partners from the public, private and not-for profit sectors. Together, we can make a world of difference.

IICD is active in Africa, Latin-America and the Caribbean, where we create and enhance development opportunities in education, good governance, livelihoods, health and the environment. Our approach includes linking local, national and international organisations as well as formulating and implementing ICT-supported development policies and projects.

IICD was established by the Netherlands Ministry of Foreign Affairs in 1996. Our core funders include the Dutch Directorate-General for Development Cooperation (DGIS) and the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC). For more information, please visit www.iicd.org.