

# **EVALUATION REPORT OF IICD'S COUNTRY PROGRAMME IN ZAMBIA**

## ***Projects in Formulation and Implementation***

Submitted by

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For Quality Service

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## **MANAGEMENT SUMMARY**

This report mirrors the image of the country programme in Zambia with emphasis on the facets of the projects in formulation and implementation. At the time of report 15 projects were recorded with 7 in formulation and the rest in implementation. To be able have a clear vision of the country programme, the culture of data collection through questionnaires administration has to be fulfilled during the course of the year. For the purpose of getting an insight of the projects in formulation and implementation, the exercise involved filling in questionnaires by the partners. The collected data was entered onto the online tool, analyzed and presented to the project partners during the Focused Group Meeting convened on 22<sup>nd</sup> November 2005 in Lusaka, Zambia. The task was fulfilled by Travailant Vers Une Economie Liberale (TEL), a local M&E partner for IICD.

The IICD monitoring and evaluation is meant to improve activities of participating partner projects. The institute has set up a participatory, self-learning and continuous M & E system. The system focuses on the collection of data by using questionnaires and discussions in bi-annual focus group meetings. Questionnaires are regularly filled in, entered in the online tool and analysed by a local IICD M&E partner. The results are then presented in a focus group meeting. During this meeting all partners present discuss the evaluation results through the guidance of the M&E partner as a way of finding solutions to critical issues identified. Through this system the satisfaction and development is evaluated.

Critical analysis of the results gave a general indication that project team members are male, with tertiary education, earning an average and residing in the capital.

The picture emerging from the partners' responses is characterized by sense of ownership and ingenuity. This is clearly indicative in the manner the hosting institutions deployed and employed the available human and financial resources as well other facilities in quest of smooth implementation of the projects. The high score in institutional support for projects in formulation confirms the ownership spirit exhibited by host institutions.

Beneficiaries' participation right from inception is one aspect that goes without mention in every project document or development process. The high score attributing project success in formulation to active participation and involvement of project team and beneficiaries is a clear assurance of sustainability of the development process. Continuity of the development process is guaranteed even after external support ceases.

The positive picture exhibited regarding collaboration and interaction between projects and with similar projects is very encouraging, however low score on publicity in local media is very worrying. Moreover this could be taken as a learning point in the effort of promoting of information acquisition and knowledge sharing.

The high score on advice received from IICD and consultants (both local and international) is indicative of the positive impact of the backstopping approach in the formulation and implementation phase.

Complimenting quantitative data analyses innovation and resource utilization were identified as themes for discussion in focus groups. The internal resources satisfactory score represented only half, leaving a question about the other half. There was a general perception that the projects were innovative, however the matter of interest was to know the kind of innovation the partners were looking for. As such innovations and resource utilization attracted interest for discussion.

The out come of the Focus Group Meeting gave clear understanding of the level of innovation in the Zambia country programme. However the unanimous perception of innovation by the partners as improving on already existing projects leaves much to done regarding pioneering. Partners drew a number of interventions and strategies so instrumental in resource use utilization and resource sourcing. This is key in building self esteem and confidence among the partners in management of their own projects in quest for fostering development in their communities.

In conclusion it's worth mentioning that the Focus Group Meeting still remains an instrumental component of the M&E system of a developmental process as it brings issues that are less captured by the quantitative methods

## **INTRODUCTION**

This is the 2005 learning report for the International Institute for Communication and Development (IICD) supported country programme in Zambia. The report mirrors the experiences of the projects in formulation and implementation. At the time data collection there were about 15 projects in the country. Seven (7) of these projects are in the implementation phase whereas the rest are still in formulation phase. The report is based on the analyses of data gathered regularly through questionnaire administration and the outcome of the Focus Group Meeting (FGM). The theme of this report is the evaluation of the projects in formulation and implementation-IICD Country Programme in Zambia.

The FGM is held bi-annually, that is, in July and November every year. The overall objective of the FGM is to enhance individual project team steering by providing a forum for participants to exchange knowledge and share solutions and experiences. The FGM is a one-day participatory workshop facilitated by the IICD Monitoring and Evaluation partner, Travaillant Vers Une Économie Libérale Ltd (TEL). The FGM took place on 22<sup>nd</sup> November 2005 in Lusaka, Zambia.

### **1.1 IICD partners**

IICD works through a wide variety of local partners in Zambia from different backgrounds including public, private and Non Governmental Organizations (NGOs). These organizations/companies have devised suitable development and poverty-reducing interventions through the strategic use of Information and Communication Technologies (ICT). The role of IICD in this partnership is to strengthen and build the capacities of local partners in understanding and application of ICT in development.

### **1.2 IICD M&E System**

#### **1.2.1 Overview of the IICD M & E system**

The IICD M&E system is an integrated approach. It focuses on both qualitative and quantitative data. The system is supported by an online software package, which makes data entry and analyses faster and easier. The IICD M&E system is a continuous participatory process, which fosters self-learning through increased interaction among local project teams. Data collected through semi-structured self-administered questionnaires are enhanced by a one-day focused group meeting. The main aim of the FGM is to identify and discuss shared problems and find joint solutions to improve the methods, approaches and results of individual projects.

In addition to the participatory M&E process IICD and its partners also occasionally use an 'Output-to-Purpose-Review' process as an external evaluation. This review provides support to the projects at any stage, helps to redefine the project's direction, and when necessary helps to modify the document containing the project partner's original formal description of the project.

In terms of reporting, projects prepare quarterly financial and progress reports. Additionally all projects prepare quarterly work-plans.

### **1.2.2 Objectives of the IICD M&E system**

The IICD M&E system has three objectives, namely:

- a) To assess IICD's effectiveness arising from the assistance provided by IICD in development of capacities, identification of needs and creation of ownership among local project teams,
- b) To assess project success in terms of the internal process (institutionalization) and the level of satisfaction of the beneficiaries and

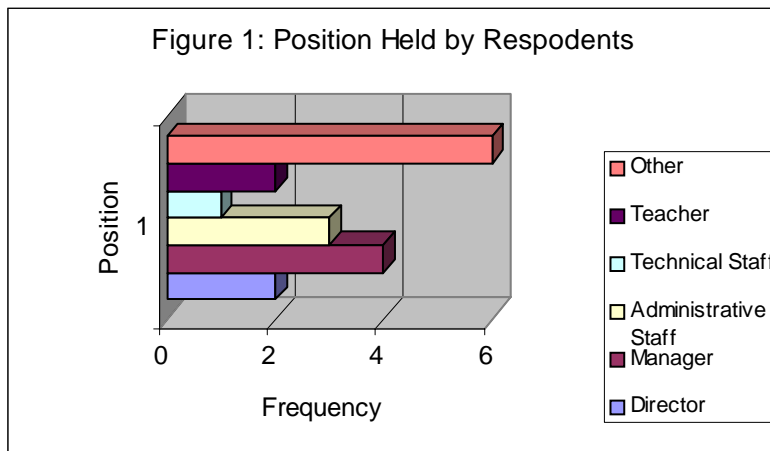
To assess the impact in terms of awareness, empowerment and economic advancement both at micro (beneficiary level) and sector level

## 2 Evaluation Results

The analyses of the monitoring data were guided by the following themes: respondents' profile, challenges and satisfaction levels in formulation and implementation phase.

### 2.1 Project in Formulation

#### 2.1.1 Respondents Profile



In figure 1 above, there is indication that the majority of respondents held other positions in their respective organizations. Please note that the picture may not be generalized as some organizations were highly represented.

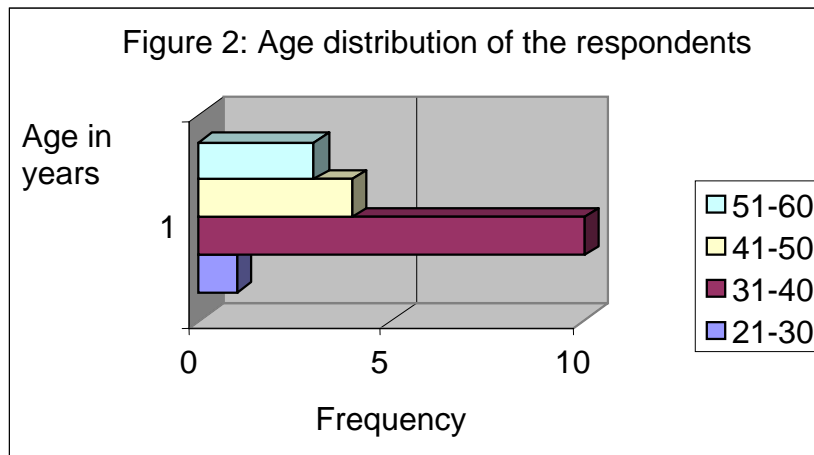


Figure 2 above indicates that the majority of respondents fell within 31-40 age category; this is in resonance with picture portrayed in implementation phase.

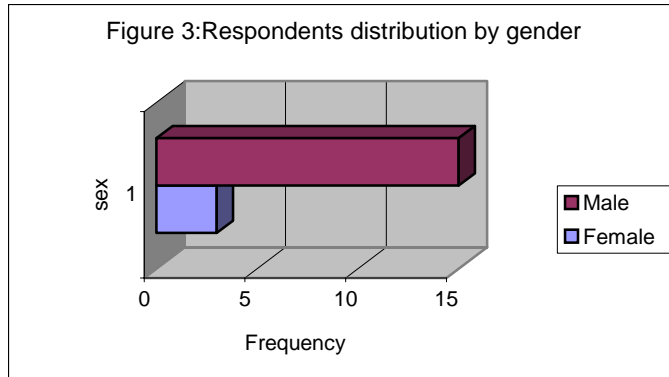


Figure 3 above indicates high involvement of male in the projects.

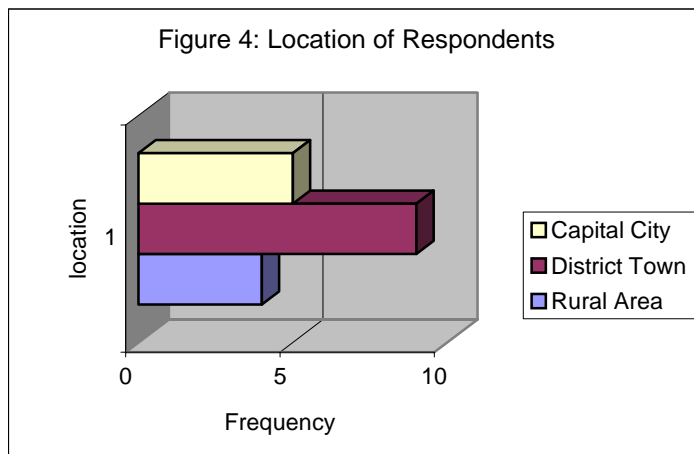


Figure 4 above shows that the majority of respondents lived in district towns and the rest residing either capital city or rural areas.

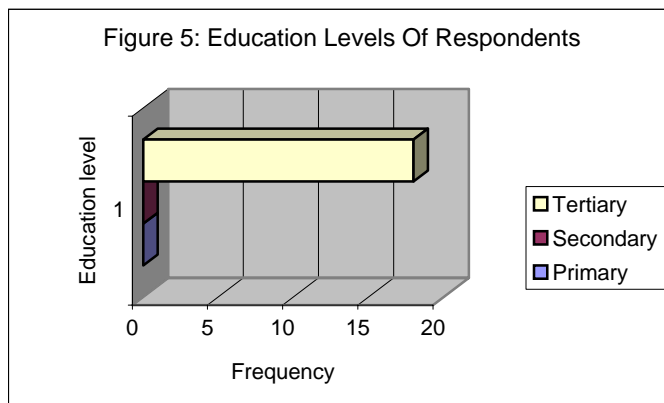


Figure 5 above indicates that all participants attained tertiary education.

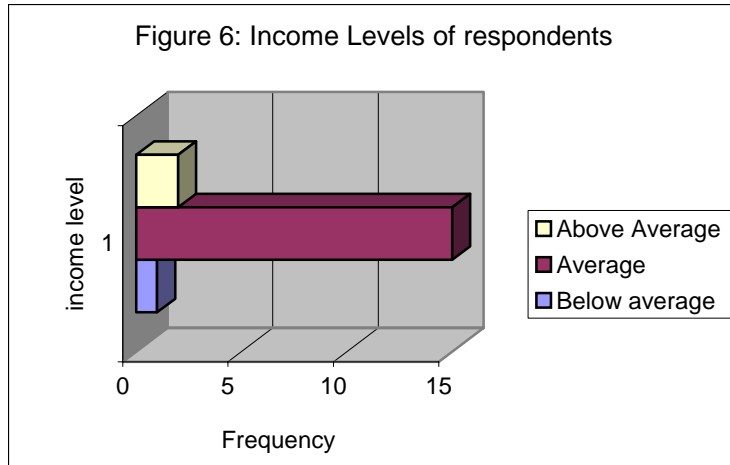


Figure 6 above indicates that the majority of respondents earned an average income.

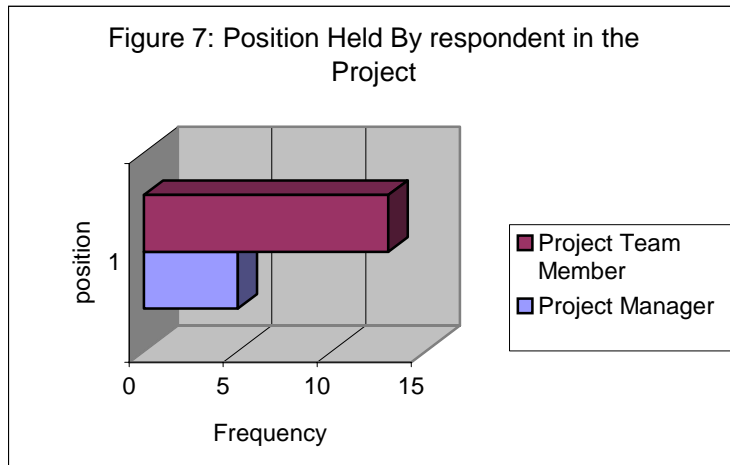
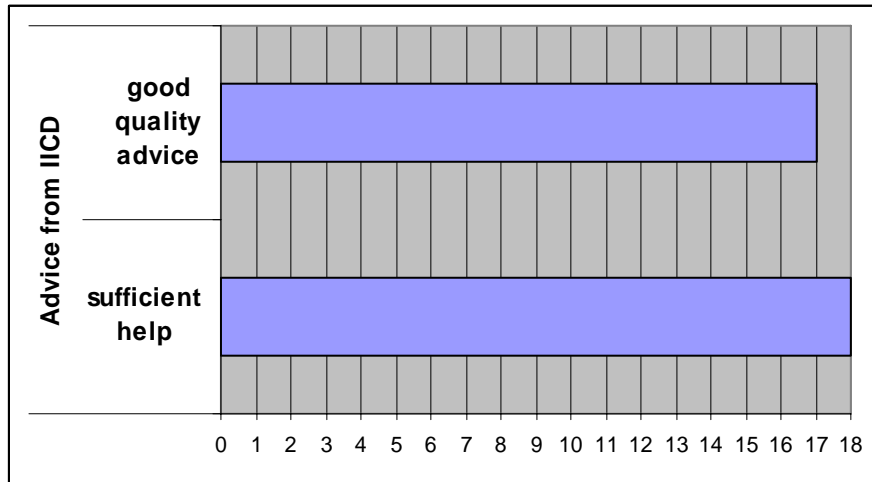


Figure 7 above indicates that majority of respondents were project team members.

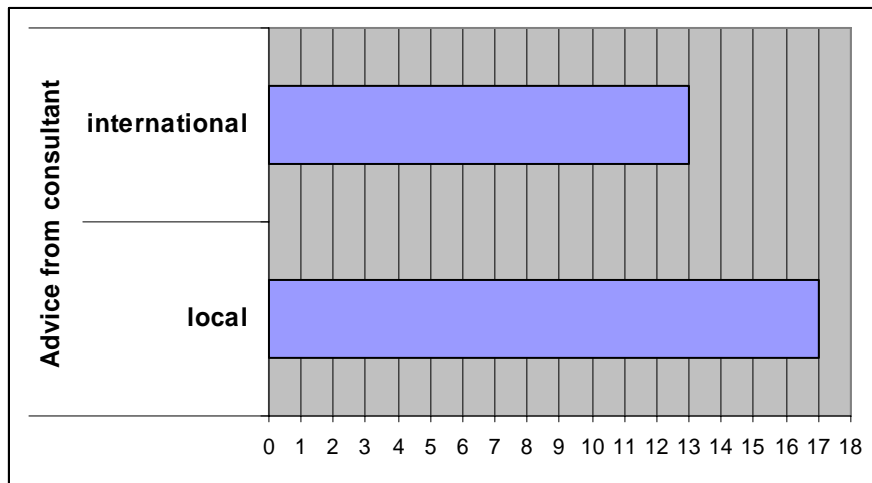
## 2.1.2 Level of Satisfaction during formulation

Figure 8: Advice from IICD



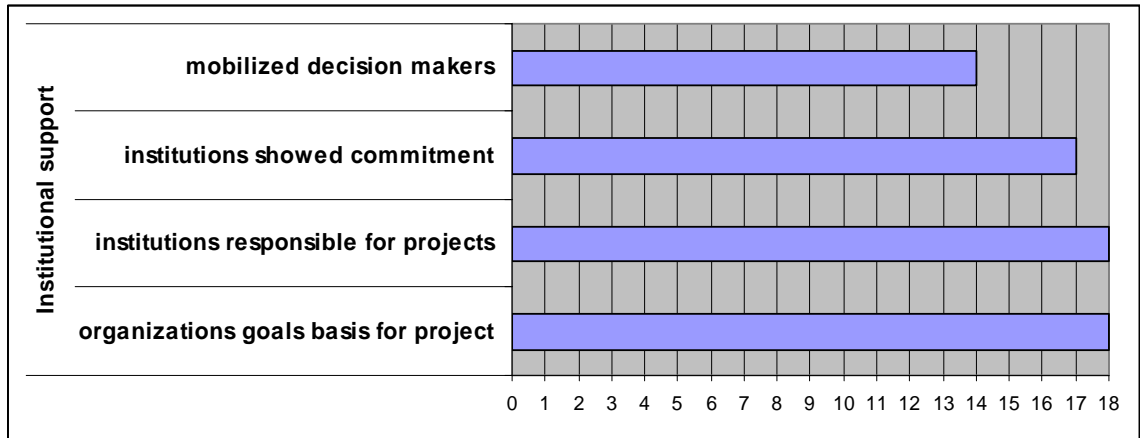
- All participants (18) indicate having received sufficient help from IICD Programme Manager in project formulation
- 17 out of 18 respondents indicated having good quality advice from the IICD Programme Manager, whilst 1 gave no answer
- This an indication that the advice received from IICD was rated highly

Figure 9: Advice from consultant



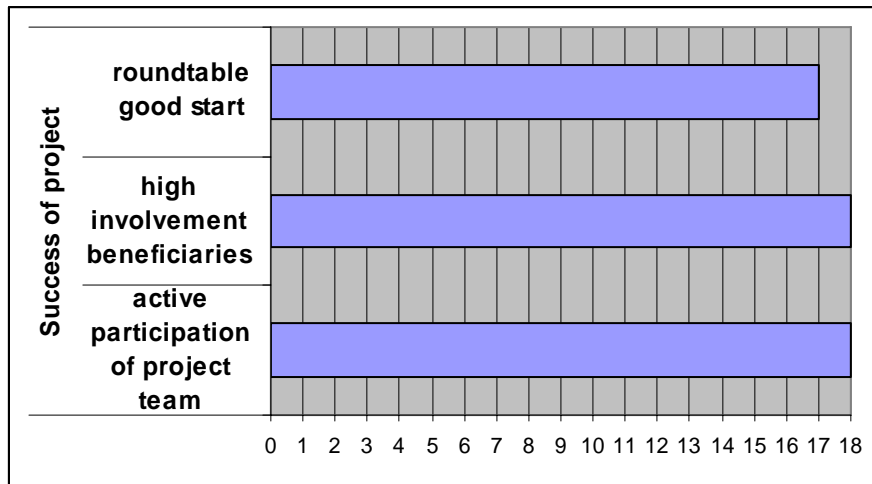
- 17 out of 18 respondents indicated having received good quality advice from the local consultant during project formulation, whilst 1 gave no answer
- 13 of 18 respondents indicated having received good quality advice from the international consultant during project formulation. 1 indicated otherwise and 4 gave no answer
- The advice from consultants was highly appreciated

**Figure 10: Support by own institution**



- All (18) respondents indicated that the projects were formulated based on the organizations goals and objectives
- All (18) respondents indicated that their institutions are collectively responsible for the projects
- 17 out of 18 respondents indicated that their institutions showed commitment in supporting the projects, whilst 1 gave no answer
- 14 out of 18 respondents indicated that hosting organizations mobilized decision-makers and agents of change
- Institution support was a common experience in during formulation

**Figure 11: Success of the project**



- All respondents (18) indicated that the success of the project was highly dependent the active participation of the protect team
- All respondents (18) indicated high involvement of beneficiaries in the project formulation
- 17 out of 18 indicated that the project ideas coming out of the roundtable were a good start for the project formulation. 1 was neutral
- The formulation phase success was attributed to the fruitful roundtable, high involvement of beneficiaries and active participation project team members

### 2.1.3 Suggestions for overall improvement of the process

- Transparency in choosing participants for the capacity development training
- Need clear guidance from IICD on what next after one is accomplished during formulation
- Long span of silence between IICD and partners during formulation should be addressed

## 2.2 Projects in implementation

### 2.2.1 Respondents Profile

The description of the respondents' profile was guided by the following factors; position held in the projects and host organizations, age, sex, location, education and income levels. The results are detailed in figures 1 through 14.

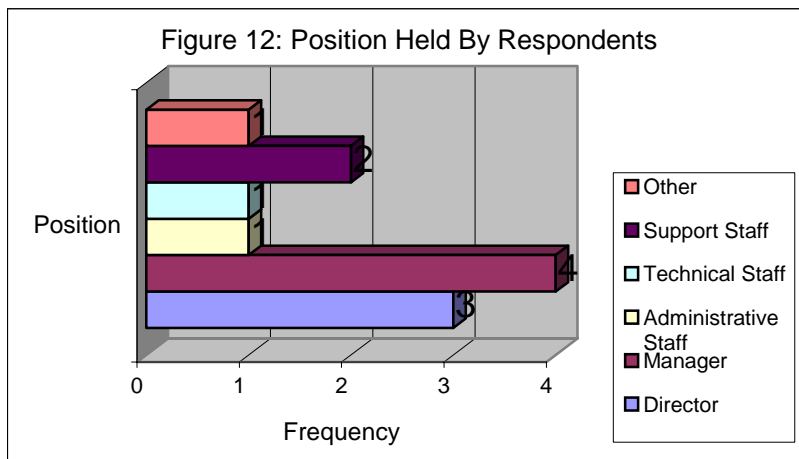


Figure 12 above shows that majority of the respondents held managerial positions, whilst the rest occupied other positions such as technical, administrative and support.

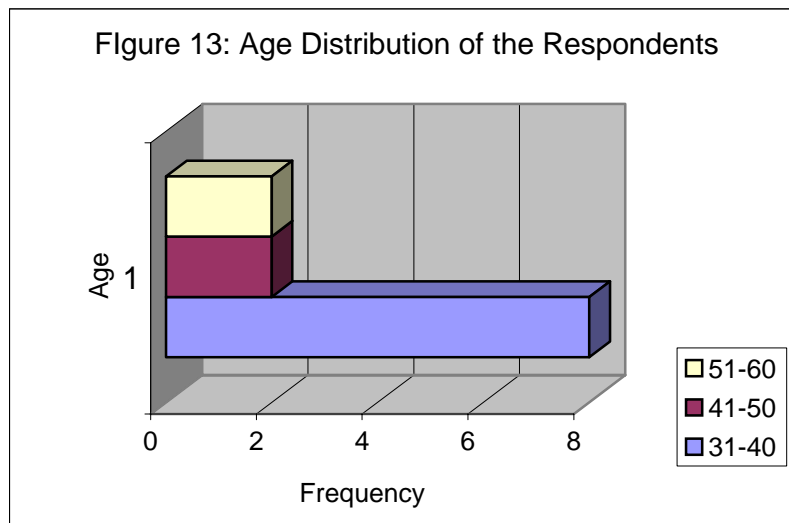


Figure 13 above indicates that majority of the respondents fell within the 31-40 years age category.

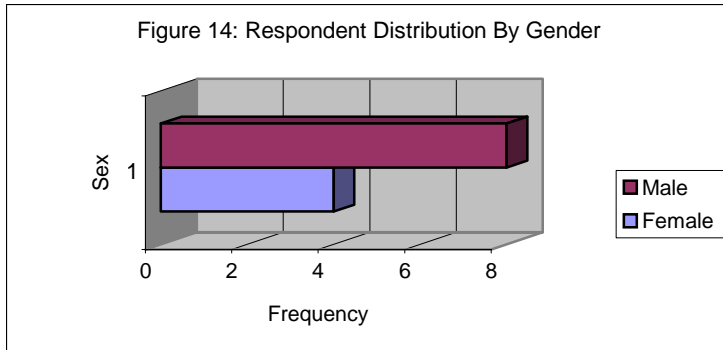


Figure 14 above indicates 1:2 gender ratio of female to male. The gender pattern or distribution is all dependant on the staff representation in the host organization.

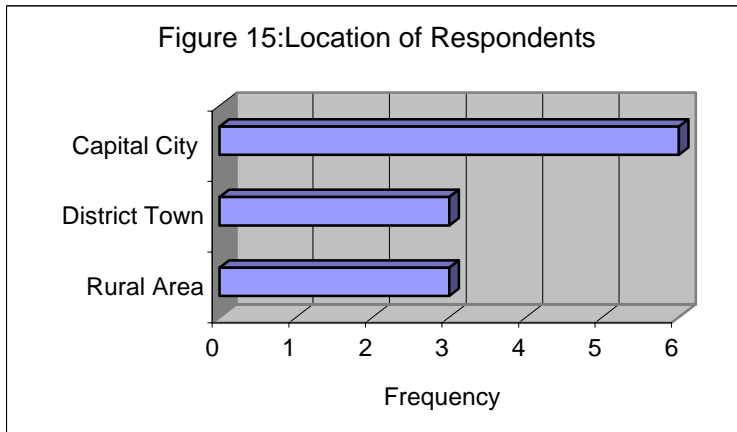


Figure 15. Indicates that the majority of respondents reside in the capital city with the rest located district towns and rural areas.

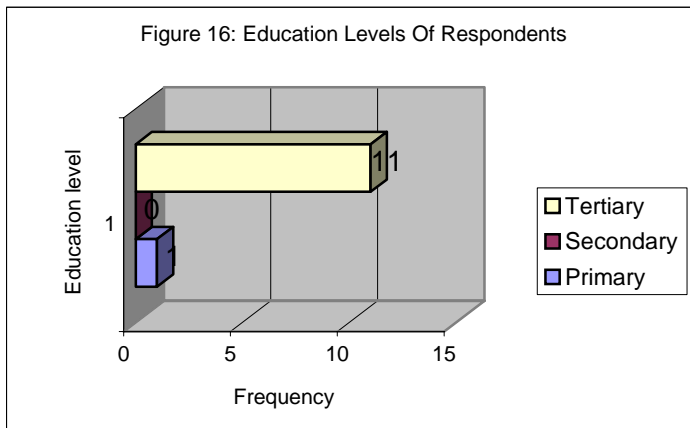


Figure 16 above shows that all respondents but one attained tertiary education.

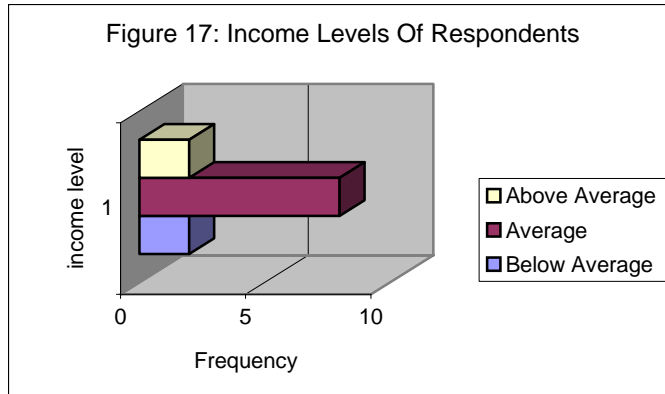


Figure 17 above indicate that the majority of respondents earn an average income.

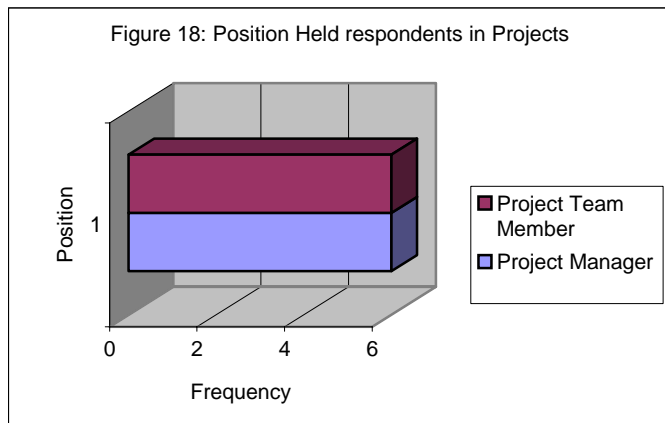
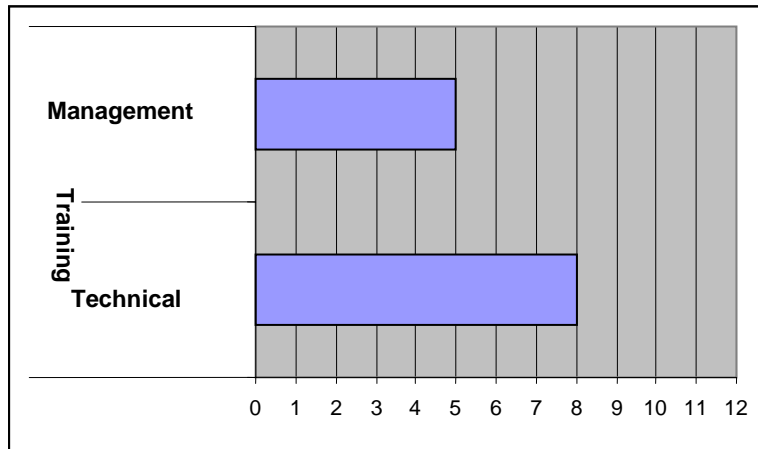


Figure 18 indicates an even distribution of project team members and managers. However this smooth distribution does imply an even or equal distribution per project or organization.

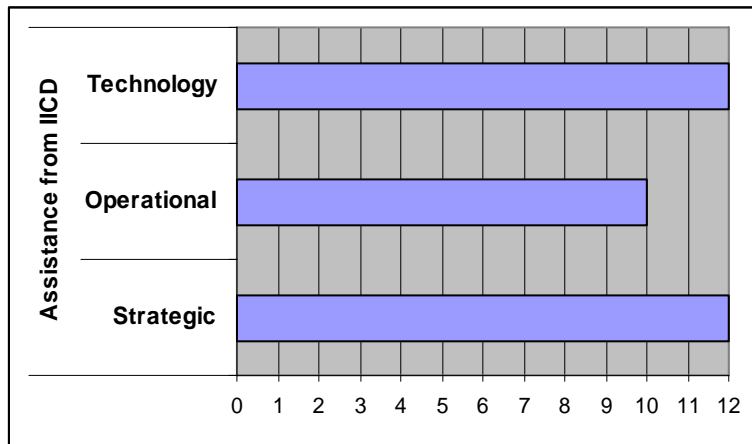
## 2.1.2 Level of Satisfaction during implementation

Figure 19: Satisfaction regarding training



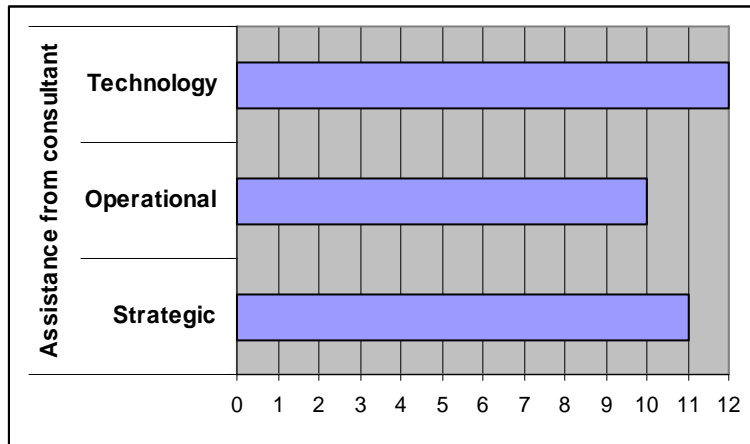
- 8 out of 12 respondents indicated that sufficient technical training was provided within the project, whilst 2 indicated neutrality and 1 gave no answer
- 5 out of 12 respondents indicated that sufficient managerial training was provided within the project, 2 gave neutral answer, whilst 2 indicated otherwise and 2 gave no answer.
- There is indication more respondents satisfied with technical than management training

Figure 20: Advice during implementation



- All the respondents indicated having had received sufficient assistance from the IICD Programme Manager on project strategic level
- All the respondents indicated having received sufficient assistance from the IICD Programme Manager on project operational level
- All the respondents indicated having received sufficient assistance from IICD Programme Manager on technology
- The high scores on the assistance from IICD during implementation reflects the positive picture during formulation

**Figure 21: Advice from consultants**



- 11 Respondents out of 12 indicated having received sufficient assistance from the local consultant on project strategic level
- 10 Respondents out of 12 indicated received sufficient assistance from the local consultant on project operational level
- All respondents indicated having received sufficient assistance from local consultant on technology
- The assistance from consultants during was also rated highly; this indicates high commitment from consultants during formulation and implementation.

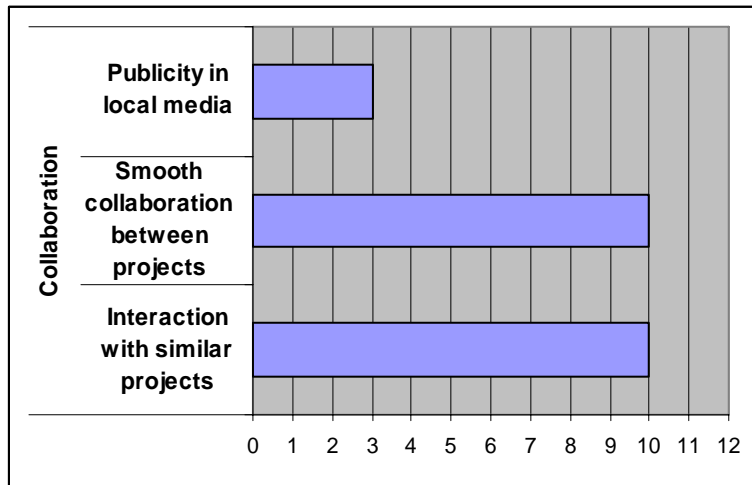
**Figure 22: Internal resources**



- 9 out of 12 respondents indicated having sufficient human resources in their institutions to implement the projects, 1 were neutral and 2 indicated otherwise.
- 7 out of 12 respondents indicated that there were sufficient financial resources in their respective to implement the projects, 2 remained neutral and 5 indicated otherwise.
- 7 out of 12 respondents indicated that there were sufficient facilities in their respective institutions implement the projects whilst 5 indicated other wise.
- Utilization of Internal resources during implementation was perceived as satisfactory

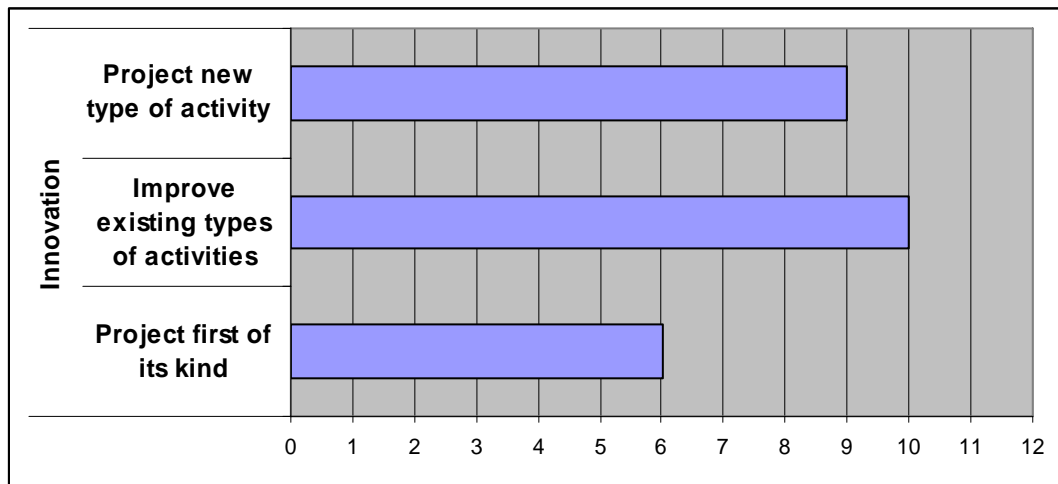
## Cooperation and Innovation

Figure 23: Collaboration



- 10 respondents of 12 indicated rated collaboration between the project partners in implementation as smooth
- 10 out of 12 respondents confirmed interaction between their respective projects and similar projects or agencies. 1 remained neutral and 1 gave no answer.
- Only 3 out of 12 respondents indicated that projects received sufficient publicity in local media, 3 were neutral, 4 indicated otherwise and gave no answer.
- Collaboration between projects and with similar was perceived as satisfactory
- However low score regarding publicity in local media could be an area of future exploration

Figure 24: Innovation



- 6 out of 12 respondents indicated that the projects were first of their kind in Zambia, 2 were neutral, 2 indicated other wise and 1 gave no answer.
- All respondents indicated that no similar projects have been initiated as a result of their respective projects.

- 9 out of 12 respondents indicated that their respective projects developed completely new type of active in their sectors, 2 indicated otherwise and 1 gave no answer.
- 10 out of 12 respondents indicated that the projects were deployed to improve or strengthen existing types of activities in their sectors.
- On average respondents were agreeable with increased innovation

#### **Negative implications of project**

- 7 out of 12 respondents indicated that the implementation of the project took more time than necessary, 2 remained neutral and 3 indicated otherwise.
- 3 out of 12 respondents indicated having experienced some resistance to change within their respective institutions /environments, 5 indicated otherwise whilst 4 remained neutral.

### **2.2.3 Problems encountered related to the implementation of the project**

The following are the responses given regarding problems encountered related to the implementation of the project during one half of year.

**Table 1: Problems encountered in implementation**

Challenges	Frequency
Delay in project take off and procurement procedures	4
Maintenance of equipment	1
Sustenance challenges regarding input materials	1
Inadequate staff	3
Lack of Transparency- coordinating agencies SIF projects	1
Little time for projects due to other commitments	1
Mobility problems-transport	1
Delay in installation of equipment by service provider	1

### **2.2.4 Suggestions for overall improvement of the process**

The table below highlights suggestions from partners for overall improvement of the process

**Table 2: suggestions for improvement**

Suggestions for improvements	Frequency
Service providers to be charged for delay in equipment installation	1
Improved interaction among partners	2
IICD should purchase equipment to avoid delays resulting from procurement procedures	2
Funds to be disbursed on time	1

Funds not go through agents	1
Agents should be screen prior engagements	1
Need for good planning and commitment if projects are to be implemented effectively	2

### 3 The Focus Group Discussion (FGD)

Most M&E systems are usually concerned with mid-term and end of term reviews mainly biased to quantitative data. However more frequent and regular data collection can be used for the M&E purposes. When coupled with participatory workshops the key players of projects being monitored can study and analyze the M&E reports. Based upon the results, the partners in development can discuss to improve conditions and hence realize the project objectives quicker and more effectively. This is the deliberate policy in place in the IICD M&E system. The IICD has the Focus Group Discussions as an integral component of the M&E system. The Focus Group Discussions which follows the preliminary report (containing quantitative data analyses) bring together partners and trainers, providing them a platform to discuss the causes of identified challenges of the data analysis. The second focus group meeting in the year 2005 brought together partners from projects in formulation and implementation, information network coordinators and IICD representatives.

The Meeting identified 2 themes or discussions, namely (1) innovations and (2) utilization of human and financial resources and facilities. For effective discussions, participants were divided into three (3) groups of about 5-6 persons each. Each group was expected to present outcome of the discussions.

#### 3.1 Discussion of Theme No. 1 (Innovations)

The purpose for discussing this theme was to create awareness and have a common understanding of the concept of innovation and relate it to how the IICD supported projects in Zambia can foster sustainable development. The results of the discussions from the 3 groups were pooled for drawing preliminary conclusions. The guiding questions for the interactive discussions were as follows:

##### 1. What is innovation?

Initiating actions focused at completely new services, i.e. *project first of its kind*, initiating actions focused on improving already existing services, i.e., *improve existing types of activities* and initiating actions focused on introducing a new service(s) in the target sector. i.e., *project new type of activity*.

## 2. Give reasons for your answer in (a) above

### Group Presentations on the Concept of Innovation

All the three groups indicated that innovation was better perceived as improving already existing services by introducing new ideas through the use of new technology. It was generally agreed that technological advancement was key to successful and beneficial innovation.

According to the discussions, improving on already existing services had the following advantages:

- The project works toward being a market leader in the offering of unique services which are appropriate by the market;
- The project gains high aspiration to be the best in the country (sector) by providing the best from what other competitors are offering
- It improves efficiency and effectiveness in projects since human resources have a rich base of experience. There are fewer incidences of trial and error in the implementation process.
- It increases the chances of success due to the many lessons learnt from the already existing activities.
- It helps build on ownership and thus makes the project more sustainable
- Adds another dimension to what is already known thus improving the knowledge base for future reference.
- It allows for expansion and projects can draw benefits from reaching economies of scale. This helps fight competition and increases profits in the long run.
- The groups also cited some practical examples of some of the possible innovations in some IICD support projects. These included the following:
  - Improving the referral centre for gender information in the case of ZARD
  - Enhancing the operations of the focal centre for ICT information dissemination or referral centre e-Brain
  - Improving cost effectiveness of the project so that the service is affordable to the community

## 3.2 Discussion of Theme No. 2 (Human and Financial Resources and Facilities)

The second theme for discussion was the utilization of resources (human and financial and facilities). The aim of the discussion was to enable the participants explore effective and innovative ways of applying resources in order to maximize benefits. From the discussions a number of strategic interventions and issues were identified as follows:

**Raising Funds:** In order to enhance sustainable in projects it was observed that there must be a number of innovative ways of raising funds. Such funds when realized ought to be retained and used to expand business so as to increase profits and turn over. Some of the proceeds could be directed at acquiring new technology and equipment. Donors were also recognized as an important source of funds. It was agreed that projects

should attract a number of donors by presenting viable proposals. Further, the private sector also emerged as a potential source of income for projects.

**Investing In Human Resources:** In order to improve the quality of services being provided by projects, human resources should be well remunerated. The need for staff training was also highlighted as essential for improving efficiency which enables projects to compete favorably in the market.

**Improving Work Culture:** Work culture was identified as an important factor in raising productivity. It was observed that members of staff in projects should be hard working and dedicated to their work. Often people do not consider time as a valuable resource in enhancing productivity. Time should be used effectively if projects are to make profits.

**Prioritizing Expenditure:** Cost effectiveness is sinequanon to increased productivity and sustainability. These calls for prioritizing expenditure by considering only activities that are necessary for effective work. Alternative uses of resources should be explored before committing any resources available. Projects must have proven accounting systems to ensure that all resources are well accounted for.

**Marketing of Services:** Services and products offered to the market must be marketed in an effective manner. Projects ought to understand their product/services well in order to explain them to the target group. This entails that members of staff should be well vested on all aspects concerning their services/products. Projects should have deliberate programmes to publicize the services/products being offered. This could be through brochures or establishing websites.

**Out Sourcing:** ICT related projects could make extra income by providing services to other organizations which are not yet well vested with ICT.

**Cooperation:** Net working provides an opportunity for ICT related projects to gain experiences and learn from others. Projects must develop good networking skills so that they could attract partners including donors. This could raise incomes and expend businesses.

## **4 Conclusion**

In general project team members are male, with tertiary education, earning an average and residing in the capital.

The picture emerging from the partners' responses is characterized by sense of ownership and ingenuity. This is clearly indicative in the manner the hosting institutions deployed and employed the available human and financial resources as well other facilities in quest of smooth implementation of the projects. The high score in institutional support for projects in formulation confirms the ownership spirit exhibited by host institutions.

Beneficiaries' participation right from inception is one aspect that goes without mention in every project document or development process. The high score attributing project success in formulation to active participation and involvement of project team and beneficiaries is a clear assurance of sustainability of the development process. Continuity of the development process is guaranteed even after external support ceases.

The positive picture exhibited regarding collaboration and interaction between projects and with similar projects is very encouraging, however low score on publicity in local media is very worrying. Moreover this could be taken as a learning point in the effort of promoting of information acquisition and knowledge sharing.

The high score on advice received from IICD and consultants (both local and international) is indicative of the positive impact of the backstopping approach in the formulation and implementation phase.

The out come of the Focus Group Meeting gave clear understanding level of innovation in the Zambia country programme. However the unanimous perception of innovation by the partners as improving on already existing projects leaves much to done to cultivate pioneers. Partners drew a number of interventions and strategies so instrumental in resource use utilization and resource sourcing. This builds the partners confidence in management of projects in quest for fostering development in their communities.

In conclusion it's worth mentioning that the Focus Group Meeting still remains an instrumental component of the M&E system of a developmental process as it brings issues that are less captured by the quantitative methods.

**Annex 1: Participants List**

<b>Name</b>	<b>ORGANISATION</b>	<b>TEL/E-MAIL</b>
Priscilla Jere	OWA	097-788153
Nervious Siantumbo	NAIS	097-763603
Justin Somi	CYP	095-814245
Rodgers Mulenga	CYP	095-910820
Lyson Chikunduzi	COSETCO	097-780859
Millica Mwela	ZARD	097-890460
Arlene Kafwamba	KABWICT	097-670579
Edward Sakufiwa	ZARI	096-642147
George Akalemwa	SIF 2	097-883574
Moses Mwale	E-BRAIN	096-453236
Deem	IICD	096-752933
Yese Bwalya	COLDREED	256950
Carity Siame	E-BRAIN	232036