

# Summary Learning Report

## Ghana Country programme 2007

**The International Institute for Communication and Development (IICD) supports a number of development projects in Ghana that seek to increase access to, and use of ICT for in various spheres of working life. These interventions are designed and implemented in collaboration with state and non-state institutions in all parts of Ghana. To promote learning for effectiveness and efficiency in service delivery, IICD and her partners have put in place a monitoring and evaluation system that allows each partner institution to receive feedback on their initiatives at all stages of implementation.**

The system for monitoring and evaluation starts with the collection of questionnaires to gather the opinions from end users of the projects, participants of the trainings and project team members. The process then allows the partners to reflect on, learn from, and take appropriate corrective actions, if need be, to ensure that the interventions achieve their objectives in the most effective and efficient ways possible.

To promote shared learning between partners, IICD and the partners organise an annual national focus group meeting during which IICD staff and partners receive a summary report of the evaluation results of all projects in the country, highlighting common trends and challenges. Participants then deliberate on these findings with the view to finding joint strategies for enhancing their efficiency and effectiveness in the design and implementation of their projects.

The learning report that is finally produced summarizes the outcomes of data collection, as well as the discussions reflecting on these outcomes. It captures the major issues arising from the processes outlined above and provides and helps to pull together in one place an overview of the successes and suggestions for moving the IICD support projects forward. This document is a summary of that very report.

### The face of ICT

Although the target populations of all partner organisations in Ghana are varied, the profile of respondents to all the evaluation questionnaires in 2007 consistently put a face on the kinds of people who were more likely to participate in the projects of IICD partners or access their services. The pattern that emerged across all the different kinds of



evaluations were that people who patronized the IICD-supported services were likely to be:

- Younger people aged between 20 and 40
- Men rather than women, as women were consistently under-represented in all cases
- More urban than rural people, with the national and provincial capitals accounting for more than 70% of all participants, except in the case of the livelihoods projects.

And for trainings especially:

- More highly educated people, usually at the University degree levels, but certainly beyond the secondary school level.
- More technical than non-technical staff.

The participants to the Focus Group concluded a lot more needs to be done to "*demystify ICTs so that they are no longer be shrouded with fears*". Suggestions were:

- Use of cyber series (Network meetings) to include more women
- Include specific issues for women and other disadvantaged groups in any action planning

- Create safe or special spaces to allow people feel more comfortable to learn about ICTs
- Promote the use of other, more accessible applications, such as mobile phones, TV and local radio.

### **Impact of the Ghana Country program**

Across board, the 2007 evaluations with end users of the Global Teenager (Education) and ECAMIC (Livelihoods) projects and with participants of capacity development activities show that project users highly appreciate the services that the projects provide and the training that they received. In terms of impact, most respondents have reported an increased sense of empowerment because they were for instance being consulted by their colleagues more often or because they were able to help others with their technical problems. At the organisational level, respondents have reported making meaningful technical contributions to the work of their organizations through solving technical problems and thereby reducing the dependency of their institutes on external technical experts. Users have also reported increased economic impact as they are now motivated to work harder while some see greater opportunities for advancement of their businesses. However, participants to trainings have reported limited say in decision-making processes in their organizations several months after their training, which may affect their motivation in the long run.

When discussing this during the Focus Group, project team members noted that *"...although people are trained to acquire skills which should help their organizations become more efficient, this can happen only when the necessary tools are provided for the adoption of skills"*. They therefore suggested that a). Basic tools needed should be provided to workshop participants and that b). Awareness creation by IICD for managers/directors should continue to enable organizational leaders create the relevant spaces for trainees to apply their knowledge and skills.

In terms of negative impact, students from the Global Teenager project expressed reservations about the real and potential

exposure of the youth to immorality from content of the internet. This issue has been taken into consideration and will be addressed in subsequent project interventions. But this issue has also been shared with the larger Global Teenager community, as this concern might come up in other countries as well.

### **IICD and institutional support**

In the analysis of the questionnaires on project formulation and implementation, project team members reflect on the support received by IICD (for instance the strategic, technical and operational advice) and the support from their own organisation, hosting the project. There were differences in the levels of satisfaction of project team members on the degree to which beneficiaries of projects were involved in project formulation and implementation of the projects within their organisations. Respondents, however, reported witnessing little or no resistance to change in organisations.

Project team members that responded to the questionnaires also expressed high levels of satisfaction on the amount and quality of technical support services they received from various IICD staff at the strategic and operational levels. They expressed satisfaction about the quality and numbers of human resources they have within their organisations for the design and implementation of their respective projects, but expressed little satisfaction with the level of facilities and financial support available in their organisation

Beyond the interventions of the participating institutions, respondents thought that IICD supported projects are generally not considered completely new activities in the country, but they do improve on existing activities. Only one respondent claimed a catalytic effect (introduction of similar projects as a result of the projects).

In general, the positive impacts of the IICD supported projects at the level of the individual, organisations and on the general operating environment have been positive across all evaluations carried out in 2007.

---

*The International Institute for Communication and Development (IICD) assists developing countries to realise locally owned sustainable development by harnessing the potential of information and communication technologies (ICTs). IICD realises its mission through two strategic approaches. First, Country Programmes bring local organisations together and help them to formulate and execute ICT-supported development policies and projects. The approach aims to strengthen local institutional capacities to develop and manage Country Programmes, which are currently being implemented in Bolivia, Burkina Faso, Ghana, Ecuador, Jamaica, Mali, Tanzania, Uganda and Zambia. Second, Thematic Networking links local and international partners working in similar areas, connecting local knowledge with global knowledge and promoting South-South and South-North exchanges. Thematic Networking focuses on sectors and themes like education, health, governance, the environment, livelihood opportunities (especially agriculture), and training. These efforts are supported by various information and communication activities provided by IICD or its partners. IICD is an independent non-profit foundation, established by the Netherlands Ministry for Development Cooperation in 1997. Its core funders include the Directorate-General for Development Cooperation (DGIS), the UK Department for International Development (DFID) and the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC).*