

Zambia Training M&E Report 2009

Introduction

The surveys were administered in paper format to trainees directly after training. 192 people were trained in Zambia, but surveys were only administered in the second two weeks. 59 surveys were collected, representing 31% of total trainees. This is certainly sufficient to be representative, and thus the findings can be considered as valid. The volunteers reported considerable resistance to the computer-based survey, which many teachers found complicated. The surveys issued were an abbreviated version, omitting the more intricate questions, but generating useful data nonetheless. Fortunately, the question structures used were quite robust and left ample room to assess the validity of the responses.

Interestingly, in some of the evaluations the respondents gave virtually identical narrative responses to the immediately preceding survey, suggesting a certain amount of consensus-building in discussions with adjacent trainees. Evidently having to critique the training generated some thought and discussion amongst respondents, and many of the suggestions are very useful in terms of designing the logistics of future training sessions.

1. Trainee Profiles

Total number of respondents	59
Male	31 (53%)
Female	20 (47%)
Age range	16- 60
Number of teacher respondents	50 (86%) ¹
Number of non-teachers with educational function	8 (14%)
Number of respondents with no educational function	0 (0%)
Teachers who were male	28 (56%)
Teachers who were female	22 (44%)

The gender balance for the Zambia training was enormously positive. So too was the fact that such a large proportion of the trainees were teachers, and that the remainder had an educational function. Two trainees work in the district teacher's resource centre, two were school accountants, two were Principals, one was a teacher trainer, and one was a college lecturer. This is probably the most optimal trainee profile which Camara is ever likely to get, and is very encouraging.

The two most prominent age groups were 30-40 year olds, and 40-50 year olds, with 28 and 20 trainees respectively. This demographic thus constitutes 81% of the total, with only seven trainees under thirty and four trainees between fifty and sixty. One disappointing statistic was that so few of the teachers were from schools that had received or were due to receive Camara computers.

Number respondents from recipient schools	22 (37%)
Number of respondents from schools that were not recipients	37 (63%)

¹ Of 58 respondents. One respondent did not specify his occupation.

2. Training Modules

Respondents who attended one course	27 (46%)
Respondents who attended two courses	22 (35%)
Respondents who attended three courses	3 (5%)
Respondents who attended four courses	4 (7%)

The contrast between course attendance in Zambia and Tanzania is interesting. Firstly, only 23 (39%) of Zambian participants opted to do the Basic Skillbuilders course, implying a somewhat higher level of proficiency. Secondly, the majority of respondents chose to do more than one course, compared to only 28% of respondents in Tanzania. Given that the courses were given at the same time and were free in both countries, it is difficult to determine where the discrepancy lies. However, the fact that the Zambia trainees were all educators is probably a significant factor.

3. Distances travelled for training

Less than 5km	11 (19%) ²
5-10km	14 (24%)
11-40km	24 (41%)
41-100km	9 (16%)
Mean distance travelled	21km
Median distance travelled	12km

The mean distance travelled was quite high, which was compounded by the fact that the training centre was very inaccessible by public transport. 28 (47%) respondents cited transport and distance as being a major difficulty in attending the training in an open question, with one emphasising that he had a 120km round trip every day. One respondent suggested that there should be training in multiple locations to reduce the travel requirements. Even if this is unfeasible it is very important that training should be conducted in a more accessible place.

² Of 58 respondents. One did not specify.

4. Trainee Course Timing Preferences

Respondents who want future training to be full-time	44 (75%)
Respondents who want future training to be part-time	15 (25%)
Respondents who want future training to last 4/5 days	1 (2%)
Respondents who want future training to last 2 weeks	34 (58%)
Respondents who want future training to last 1 month	22 (37%)
Respondents who want future training to last more than 1 month	2 (3%)

The desired course length is much more moderate than it was in Tanzania. There is probably some justification for piloting a full-time, month-long course in one country to determine what actual attendance rates it attracts. There could well be a significant difference between the amount of block training teachers would like to attend and what is actually feasible for them. Clearly, the idea of a two-week course in seems highly popular in Zambia.

5. Relevance and Delivery

Respondents were asked to rate the relevance of the training to their teaching requirements. From the responses given the material covered was clearly highly relevant, even allowing for the inevitable courtesy bias:

Very relevant	56 (95%)
Some relevance	2 (3%)
Not at all	1 (2%)

Interestingly the delivery, while considered very good or excellent, was given a slightly lower rating than the content of the material. This is probably explained by the fact that four respondents reported that the facilitators went too fast. However, the overall delivery was clearly deemed to have been of very high calibre.

Excellent	30 (52%)
Very good	24 (41%)
Good	4 (7%)
Fair	0
Poor	0

6. Confidence in using computers

Teachers were also required to rate their confidence in using computers both before and after the training.

	Confidence before training	Confidence after training
Very Confident	5 (9%) ³	30 (51%)
Confident	17 (29%)	29 (49%)
A little	25 (43%)	0
Not at all	11 (19%)	0

The changes in confidence are very positive, with all respondents claiming to be confident or very confident after training. The actual finding of this question is quite limited in two respects. Firstly, without an examinable curriculum there is no empirical measure against which to rate trainee proficiency. Therefore, while teachers may feel far more comfortable using computers there is not necessarily a significant corresponding improvement in ability. Secondly, improved ability in using computers does not necessarily correlate strongly to better use of them in the classroom. While it is reasonable to assume that such a significant rise in the confidence of teachers using computers will generate a corresponding increase in the effective use of technology in the classroom where it is available, there is certainly a need to test this correlation in future years. All respondents reported that they would use technology in the classroom regularly once it became available, with 13 intending to use it daily. While this reported enthusiasm is certainly positive, it is likely to be highly misleading.

³ Of 58 respondents. One respondent did not specify.

7. Time and cost

Teachers were asked to assess as to whether the course was worth the time and cost incurred. The responses were as follows:

	Citations
Yes	54 (93%) ⁴
No	4 (7%)

Given that the training was given free of charge, it is interesting that the mean cost of attendance incurred by trainees was 191,250 Kwacha (€27.54).⁵ The vast majority (78%)⁶ of attendees reported that their employers had paid for the expenses incurred, with 5 (11%) reporting that they had split the costs with their employer, and the remaining 5 (11%) reporting that they had borne the full costs of attendance themselves. Significantly, of the five attendees who paid their own expenses in full, all reported that the training had been worth the time and cost.

8. Suggested improvements

The single most cited way to improve the training was giving it more time, with a surprising 44 respondents (75%) emphasising this point in an open question. A significant factor underpinning this was the expressed desire by several trainees for more time to practice what they had learnt, with two even asking to be examined on it. While four respondents explicitly stated that the facilitators had delivered the material too quickly, it appears that most trainees were just anxious to receive more training. Another significant suggestion was the provision of handouts or notes for teachers. The data certainly seems to suggest a conspicuous demand for an examinable, comprehensive training framework, delivered in a more accessible location. However, the core relevance and delivery of the Zambia '09 training was virtually universally lauded by trainees, and future developments should deliberately build on this success.

⁴ Of 58 respondents. One respondent did not specify.

⁵ Exchange rate as of December 2009. The training was in July.

⁶ Of 46 respondents. 12 did not specify who paid their expenses.