



# Tanzania

## Zonal Innovation Challenge Fund

Zonal Innovation Challenge Fund Processes,  
Outcomes and Lessons Learnt to Date

May 2009

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

This report documents the processes that were followed during the first call of the Tanzania Zonal Innovation Challenge Fund (ZICF) from the receipt of full technical and financial proposals from short-listed applicants through to the signing of contracts and disbursement of grant funds. This report documents the outcomes at the various key stages, and should be read in conjunction with the supporting set of appendices. This report follows on from a process report (February 2009) which documented the processes followed from the issuing of the call through to inviting of short-listing applicants to submit full proposals.

This report also highlights the challenges during the implementation of these processes and identifies the changes that will be made to future calls as a result of the lessons learnt from the first call.

## 2. SUMMARY OF THE OUTCOMES OF THE FIRST CALL FOR INNOVATION CHALLENGE FUND

As described in the previous report, the first call for concept notes resulted in the submission of a total of 265 concept notes (98 for the post-harvest platform, 99 for draught-power, and 68 for dairy). Of these 113 (or 43% of the total received) were passed to the external assessors for review (37 for post-harvest, 31 for draught power and 45 for dairy).

Of those concept notes that were put forward to the assessors for review, a total of 23 concepts were then invited to prepare full technical and financial proposals either as a lead or a partner. In all but one instance the assessors partnered concepts together to create ten comprehensive solutions under the following themes.

The ten full proposals were then reviewed by a selection committees including NIC and platform members along with members of the RIU Country Team and four proposals were identified for funding. For each of these 'winning' proposals the selection committees provided feedback to the proposal teams on areas where their projects needed to be improved and each team was provided support from an technical advisor (or 'Resource Person') and the Fund Manager to improve and finalise their proposals.

The four winning proposals were<sup>1</sup>:

- 1) **Innovative Post-Harvest Loss Tools** (Post Harvest concepts 20057, 2000, 20053)
- 2) **Use of Talking Pictures and Other Dairy Decision Making Tools to Increase Milk Yields** (Dairy concepts 10068 and 10034)
- 3) **Improved Animal Draught Power - Through Improved Yoke-Bar Assembly and New Ox-Weeder** (Draught Power concepts 30086, 30004, 30085)

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<sup>1</sup> Summaries of each of the winning proposals can be found in the Appendices of this Document.

#### 4) **Botanical and Integrated Post-Harvest Pest Management** (Post Harvest concepts 20088 and 20018)

Proposals for two of the projects (Innovative Post-Harvest Loss Tools and Use of Talking Pictures) have now been agreed and contracts signed, the Fund Manager is currently awaiting some final documents from the applicants prior to the disbursement of funds which should happen in the last week of May. The proposals for the remaining two projects are now being finalised and it is intended to sign contracts and disburse funds in the first week of June.

##### **2.1. LESSONS LEARNT**

During the implementation of the first call, a number of changes were made to the review and selection processes due to logistical and financial constraints (See Section 4) and a number of lessons were learnt. These lessons have been used to revise the fund management processes for future calls, including:

- **Targeting of the Call** – The first call was for solutions to address challenges that required higher level solutions and the processes were designed for the review and selection of Higher Level Solution Providers. However, given the programme focus on grassroots, the call was advertised in a manner to attract both Higher Level and Grassroots Level Solution Providers. Whilst this was done for good reasons it complicated the subsequent selection processes and increased the work load of all involved. In future, all calls will be targeted either Higher Level Solution Providers or Grassroots Level Solution Providers, but not both.
- **Platform Participation** - The participation of the platform members in the selection process did not take place until the final review of the Full Proposals. It was agreed that in future, the platforms should be involved in the concept note selection activities, so that they may have input in not only selecting the winning concept(s) but also advising on how the project should be implemented, how it could be developed further to address the platform needs and advising on what activities will (or will not) work in the target areas.
- **Number of Projects** – At the same time as the implementation of the first call, there was significant discussion on the number of projects to be funded by ZICF. This had originally been set at 6, however, the team agreed to increase the number of projects to 16 including:
  - **Six Higher Level Solution Provider Led Projects** – To include 4 of the projects identified in the first call and 2 further projects to be advertised in the new financial year;
  - **Ten Grassroots Level Solution Provider Led Projects** – An average budget of £20,000 would be assigned to the grassroots level projects which would be targeted at the district

level platforms and are expected to be 1 year projects. With 5 projects occurring in 2009/10 and an additional 5 projects occurring in 2010/11.

The existing fund management processes were revised to ensure that the additional 10 projects could be effectively managed. Separate processes were developed for the two types of solution (Higher Level vs. Grassroots Level) in line with the Demand Led Innovation Process (DLIP).

- **RNRRS Outputs** - At the time of issuing the call, the programme direction was very much for a demand led approach and pushing of RNRRS Research outputs onto applicants was discouraged. Thus the call only provided RNRRS outputs as examples of the potential research that could be put into use, but left the way open for research from other programmes and organisations to be funded. As result the majority of the short-listed projects did not incorporate an RNRRS output. By the time of the final selection meetings, the focus had changed and there was strong push towards getting large numbers of RNRRS outputs into use. As much as possible, the Country Team encouraged the winning applicants to incorporate complementary RNRRS outputs into their projects. Whilst not all platform challenges can necessarily be addressed by an RNRRS, in future calls it has been agreed that, wherever possible, applicants will be required to use at least one RNRRS.
- **Full Proposals** – For the first call 3-4 applicants per platform were short-listed at the Concept Note stage and invited to submit full technical and financial proposals. As a result, a second round of selection activities had to be undertaken adding significant additional cost and time to process. In future calls, only one concept team will be invited to submit a full technical and financial proposal. The RIU Team will provide detailed support and guidance to the team and will also assign a technical expert (A Resource Person) who will ensure that all activities are viable and will mentor the team in developing their proposal.

## **2.2. THE NEXT CALL**

A Call for Concept Notes from Higher Level Solution Providers was issued in the Tanzanian National press on May 15<sup>th</sup> to seek solutions to address two challenges identified by Coast (Poultry) Platform:

- Create sustainable access and availability of affordable and appropriate chicken feeding regime to increase the productivity (as measured by the weight of chickens and number of eggs produced) of chicken farmers in the coast region; and,
- Increase the capacity of local chicken farmers' to access and utilize appropriate and effective poultry disease management & control services.

The deadline for submission has been set at June 5<sup>th</sup>. A process report documenting the processes followed for this call will be prepared on conclusion of the process (i.e. when the successful applicant has been contracted) which is expected to be completed by the end of July.

### 3. TANZANIA INNOVATION CHALLENGE FUND PROCESSES FROM INVITATION FOR FULL PROPOSALS TO FIRST DISBURSEMENTS

The following sections provide more detailed information on the processes that have been followed since the submission of the previous process report and cover the steps from the receipt of full proposals through to the signing of contracts with the successful applicants.

Ten successful applicants were invited to submit full Technical and Financial Proposals and a deadline for submission of proposals was set for February 20<sup>th</sup> 2009. Upon receipt of the proposals a number of steps were followed from the initial review to review/selection by the external examiners and culminating in the finalisation of proposals, contracting and disbursement as shown in Figure 1.

**Figure 1: Full Proposal Assessment to First Disbursement**



It had originally been intended that these processes would be completed by the end of March 2009 with projects commencing in April 2009, however, a number of constraints precluded this from happening and the processes will be completed in May 2009.

### **3.1. RECEIPT AND LOGGING OF FULL PROPOSALS**

Of the ten applicants, nine submitted their proposals on or before the deadline (Friday 20<sup>th</sup> February). One applicant (Draught Power Concept Note No. 30088) contacted the Fund Manager, one day before the deadline requesting a short extension to Monday 23<sup>rd</sup> February.

Given that RIU Tanzania intended to seek the best ideas from the best people, the Fund Manager granted this short extension, however the applicant was warned that their inability to meet a set deadline would be considered during the selection procedure and could count against them. All full proposals were submitted via email and copies of the proposals were printed and filed, dates of receipt were logged on the file copy of each proposal.

### **3.2. IDENTIFICATION OF ASSESSORS**

For the full proposal review, two external assessors were identified to undertake both a ‘home-based’ review of the ten proposals, and to participate in the joint assessment days to determine a short-list of proposals to be presented to the platforms. In addition, a member of each platform was also identified to represent the platforms during the selection activities. All assessors were identified by MUVK and EDI then made logistical arrangements for their participation in the process.

For each platform review, there were three assessors (two external assessors and one platform representative) who were supported by the Fund Manager, Country Coordinator, NMLC and NPF. The following table provides details of the final assessors involved at concept note selection stage:

**Table 1: External Assessors**

<b>Assessor Name</b>	<b>Specialist Field</b>	<b>Other Platform Assessed</b>
Professor Monyo	Post Harvest	Draught Power, Dairy
Happiness Mchomvu	Cross-Cutting on all, with excellent understanding of RIU	Dairy, Post-Harvest, Draught Power
Lut Zylstra	Dairy	-
Daniel Chilosa	Post Harvest	-
Thabit Waziri	Draught Power	-

### **3.3. INTERNAL REVIEW AND FORWARDING TO SELECTION COMMITTEE**

The proposals were reviewed internally by the Fund Manager to ensure that the submissions were complete and that the key recommendations made by the Concept Note Selection Committee had been incorporated into the full proposals. The proposals were then forwarded via email to the selection committee members as well as the RIU Country Coordinator, NMLC and NPF for review.

In one instance (Post Harvest Concept Note No 20057) the Fund Manager found that the proposal had not incorporated the Concept Note Selection Committee’s recommendation to incorporate rice processing technologies. The Fund Manager immediately contacted the proposal team and requested that they amend their proposals accordingly and submit a revised proposal prior to the Selection Committee

meetings. The proposal team agreed to do so and their updated proposals were reviewed by the Assessors during the selection meeting.

### **3.4. DESIGN OF FULL PROPOSAL ASSESSMENT SHEETS AND INSTRUCTIONS TO EXTERNAL ASSESSORS FOR CONDUCTING ‘HOME BASED ASSESSMENT’**

A detailed proposal assessment sheet was designed for use by the assessors along with instructions and guidelines to them to assist them in carrying out the home based review of the full proposals. Each Assessor was requested to review the proposals and score the proposal on a range of criteria including relevance, feasibility, added value, environmental impact, partner capacity and cost (See attached).

### **3.5. PROPOSAL ASSESSMENT DAYS**

Two days were set aside for jointly discussing and reviewing the full proposals for the three platforms on the 26<sup>th</sup> and 27<sup>th</sup> February at EDI offices.

All assessors were requested to conduct a desk-based review of the proposals and copies of the assessment forms prior to the assessment days. During their review, Assessors were also requested to identify any ways in which the proposals could be further enhanced, for discussion during the assessment days.

**Figure 2: Proposal Assessment Day Timetable**

<b><u>Tuesday 26<sup>th</sup> February</u></b>	
Post-Harvest Platform review	10.00 - 13.00 hrs
Draught Power Platform review	- 14.00 -17.00
<b><u>Wednesday 27<sup>th</sup> January</u></b>	
Dairy Platform Review	- 09.00 - 13.00 hrs

During each session, the Assessors discussed each proposal and then the committee agreed on which proposals should be short-listed for review by the platform. For each proposal the review involved:

- Comparison of Assessors Scores for the 5 main assessment criteria. Where significant differences were observed between Assessors scoring, the group discussed their reasons for these differences;
- Each Assessor was asked to explain what they liked and did not like about each proposal;
- Then the committee then had open discussion about each proposal and sought to identify any issues that needed to be clarified and key areas that would need to change in order for the proposal to be funded; and,
- Finally, the committee voted on whether the proposal should be forwarded to the platform committee.

At the end of the session, the committee then discussed those proposals that had been short-listed further and identified further recommendations for improvement.

#### **3.5.1. OUTCOME OF PROPOSAL ASSESSMENT DAYS**

By the end of the assessment days, two proposals had been short-listed for each of the platforms. Reports on the discussions and deliberations for each proposal under each platform have been prepared (See attached Proposal Assessment Day Reports) which summarise the reasoning behind the selection/rejection of each proposal. The outcomes of the assessment days are summarised in Table 2.



For each of the short-listed proposals, the Fund Manager documented the selection committee's requests for clarification and recommendations for changes to the proposals. These documents were reviewed and approved by the Country Coordinator and then sent to the proposal teams. The proposal teams were then requested to provide clarifications and confirm that they would be willing to make the identified changes should they be selected by the platforms selectors. All applicants agreed to the proposed changes and provided the required clarifications prior to the platform selection meetings.

### **3.6. PLATFORM REVIEW MEETING**

A one day meeting was then arranged by MUVEK for representatives of each platform to be presented summaries of each of the proposals and prioritise these projects. MUVEK arranged for the platform leaders to contact all platform members and ask them to nominate five representatives from each platform to attend the meeting. In the case of the Dairy Platform, one of the short-listed proposals was submitted by the Platform Leader, thus MUVEK contacted the platform members directly. Since this was considered a 'platform' activity, all arrangements were made by MUVEK.

One of the External Assessors (Happiness Mchomvu) attended the meeting and presented a summary of each of the short-listed proposals. Summaries of each proposal were presented to the platforms were provided to the platform representatives (See attached<sup>2</sup>). Each platform then spent one hour discussing the proposal summaries and was asked to identify:

- What they liked about the proposal
- How the project could be improved
- What questions they would ask the proposal team

The platform members were then given the opportunity to ask questions about the proposals to the Country Coordinator, Fund Manager and External Assessor. Each platform group then voted on which of the two proposals was the highest priority. Reports on the discussions for each platform have been prepared (See attached Platform Review Day Reports).

#### **3.6.1. OUTCOMES OF THE PLATFORM REVIEW MEETINGS**

Overall the platform meetings generally endorsed the External Assessors decisions and confirmed that they would be happy for either project to go ahead. Since there were ongoing discussions amongst the programme team as to the number of projects that could be funded/managed, the Platform assessors voted as which project should take priority.

The table below summarises the outcomes of both the External Assessors and Platform Selection Meetings and summarises the reasoning behind the decisions.

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<sup>2</sup> To ensure full understanding of the platform members all proposals were presented in Kiswahili. English language versions of the proposal summaries are attached to the proposal, Kiswahili versions are available upon request.

**Table 2: Summary of the Outcomes of the Proposal Assessment Days**

Proposal Title	External Assessors		Platform Members	
	Outcome	Comments	Outcome	Comments
<b>Post Harvest Platform</b>				
<b>Innovative Post-Harvest Loss Tools</b> (concepts 20057, 2000, 20053) supported by RUDI	Short-listed and forwarded to platform	Using new technology to reduce losses in maize processing and improve quality of rice. Well received by committee.	Platform Priority 1	Both projects were well received and the voting was close with Innovative Loss Tools winning by one votes. The projects are complementary and ideally should both be funded.
<b>Botanical and Integrated Post-Harvest Pest Management</b> (concepts 20088 and 20018)	Short-listed and forwarded to platform	Utilising Bio-Pesticides and Improved traditional storage structures to address losses in maize storage. Generally well received by the committee and only minor improvements required.	Platform Priority 2	The Platform suggested that project should target wards with the highest production and work with existing farmers groups.
<b>Better Post-Harvest Pest Resident Seed Varieties, leading to reduction in Post-Harvest Loss</b> (Concepts 20052 and 20087)	Rejected	Seeds are not really a post harvest issue and the new varieties proposed have not yet been approved for release in Tanzania. The idea of setting up a SACCOS is sound by far too large and long term an activity for ZICF. The proposal offered very little new, used too many research outputs and activities and did not focus on one particular challenge.		
<b>Draught Power Platform</b>				
<b>Improved Animal Draught Power - through Improved Yoke-Bar Assembly and New Ox-Weeder</b> (concepts 30086, 30004, 30085)	Short-listed and forwarded to platform	A very good concept that is innovative, new, environmentally sound and directly benefits small holder farmers. There is also a large potential for upscaling and outscaling.	Platform Priority 2	Platform members recommended that the project should also promote ox-drawn ploughs and carts and that the target group include potential users of the technology not just those who already use ox-drawn technology.
<b>Conservation Agriculture Technology - High Emphasis on Conservation Tillage as a way of reducing drudgery particularly for</b>	Rejected	The Government tried this idea and have been unable to find further funding. Some of the technology proposed has not yet been proven and the idea of planting ground cover crops whilst valid		

Proposal Title	External Assessors		Platform Members	
	Outcome	Comments	Outcome	Comments
<b>women</b> (concepts 30064, 30090 with support from RUDI)		would is too long term an activity for ZICF to fund.		
<b>Mobilising Farmers to Access Mechanised Draught Power Tools &amp; Technologies</b> (Concepts 30088 and 30062 linked to 30007)	Short-listed and forwarded to platform	The proposal was somewhat distant from the mobilisation idea and had become focussed on promoting technology. The selection committee decided to allow it through on the condition that the team revise the proposal to focus entirely on mobilisation.	Platform Priority 1	See notes below.
<b>Dairy Platform</b>				
<b>Introduction &amp; local fabrication of Charcoal Coolers and Food Grade Cans for reduction in spoilage and improved marketing and processing of milk products</b> (concepts 10038 and 10059)	Rejected	Not clear how the project would address the challenge, only one sentence really addresses the Dairy Challenge. The Charcoal coolers are valid technology but Tanga is too hot for them to be effective. Generally the project is repeating too many activities that have already been done in the area.		
<b>Use of Talking Pictures and Other Dairy Decision Making Tools to Increase Milk Yields</b> (concepts 10068 and 10034)	Short-listed and forwarded to platform	Very popular idea, talking Pictures (an RNRRS) was developed in Tanga urban making it ideal to roll out across the region. The selection committee identified a number of changes to be made including adding extra RNRRS outputs.	Platform Priority 1	Project was well received and the platform recommended that the team utilise progressive farmers. This idea was subsequently rejected as these farmers tend to be ahead of everyone else and have limited motivation to help other farmers. Instead the project will work with Local government Extension Workers.
<b>Improved Dry Season Feed, and strengthening of Artificial Insemination Services</b> (Concepts 10020 and 10024)	Rejected	Two key problems: The idea of using cassava as cattle feed would not work as it is sold for a high price in markets, making selling it more beneficial than feeding to their cows. The size of cattle herds in Tanga region making artificial insemination		

Proposal Title	External Assessors		Platform Members	
	Outcome	Comments	Outcome	Comments
		unviable.		
<b>Cheap and simple technology of using traps and targets for tsetse and Trypanosomiasis (Concept 10050)</b>	Short-listed and forwarded to platform	Tried before and failed due to lack of community participation. The idea is sound though, so the proposal team will need to come up with a clear strategy to gain community buy in and should also look at using other RNRRSs and working with other actors in the region with experience in this area, e.g. Mseri Ranch.	Platform Priority 2	-

### **3.7. FINAL OUTCOMES**

Having completed the review and selection meetings, the Fund Manager was then instructed to move forward with finalising proposals for the three priority projects agreed by the platforms:

- 1) **Innovative Post-Harvest Loss Tools** (Post Harvest concepts 20057, 2000, 20053)
- 2) **Use of Talking Pictures and Other Dairy Decision Making Tools to Increase Milk Yields** (Dairy concepts 10068 and 10034)
- 3) **Mobilising Farmers to Access Mechanised Draught Power Tools & Technologies** (Concepts 30088 and 30062 linked to 30007)

#### **3.7.1. MOBILISING FARMERS TO ACCESS MECHANISED DRAUGHT POWER TOOLS & TECHNOLOGIES**

Of the three final proposals, the Fund Manager had significant reservations regarding Mobilising Farmers to Access Mechanised Draught Power Tools & Technologies (Concept Note No. 30088) proposal which had been pushed forward by both the External Assessors and the Platform members. Like other projects, the Assessors had identified a series of recommendations to be made to this proposal and everyone was excited by the idea of a project to mobilise farmers, as this was a key need identified by all platforms.

However, the actual proposal that was submitted was far from the concept that the Assessors were excited about and at the time contained only a small element of mobilisation. Whilst the Fund Manager completely agreed that mobilisation was a priority for the programme, it was felt that this project was not the right one and that the proposal would need to be completely written to bring it into line with the needs of the platforms.

These issues were raised to the Country Team and it was agreed that we had been a little overzealous with this concept and it was decided not to move forward with this proposal. Instead it was decided that a call focussed solely on mobilisation would be made with a detailed terms of reference and would be targeted at organisations with substantial experience in this area. Later, it was decided that in fact this activity would be contracted out as a 'consultancy' from MUVK's own budget, as this would allow greater control by the Country team and allow much more flexibility to try a variety approaches to mobilising farmers.

Therefore, the Country Team agreed that the Fund Manager should instead move forward with the second priority proposal under the Draught Power Platform (**Improved Animal Draught Power - through Improved Yoke-Bar Assembly and New Ox-Weeder**) which all platform members had also agreed was a valuable project.

Given the time constraints at the time of this decision, it was agreed that the Fund Manager should first finalise the two proposals for the Dairy and Post-Harvest platforms and then move forward with this proposal in April with the aim of contracting in mid-late May. In the meantime the Country Coordinator agreed to identify a Resource Person to advice the proposal team.

#### **3.7.2. NUMBER OF PROJECTS**

At the time of the proposal review and selection, the country team were discussing the number of projects that should be funded under ZICF. Originally the Fund Manager had been contracted on the assumption that six projects would be funded one for each of the planned platforms. Increasing the number of

projects to be funded would have an impact on the workload (and thus the number of days) of the Fund Manager. After long discussions it was decided to increase the number of projects from 6 to 16 (6 for higher level solution provider led and 10 grassroots solution provider led projects) and the fund management processes were revised to ensure this change was manageable. (See Lessons Learnt Section for further discussion).

Throughout these discussions, members of the Country Team had asked why ZICF could not fund both projects under the post-harvest platform as the two projects were highly complementary and the **Botanical and Integrated Post-Harvest Pest Management** (Concepts Note No. 20088) was well received by the Assessors, Platform and Country Team.

Having agreed that a higher number of projects could be funded, the Fund Manager was therefore instructed to move forward with finalising this proposal. As with the Draught Power project, above, timeframes did not allow for this process to begin immediately. Instead it was agreed that the Fund Manager would move forward once a Resource Person was identified by MUVEK with the aim of contracting the project in mid-late May.

### **3.7.3. FINAL OUTCOMES**

Therefore, the Country Team decided to fund 4 projects:

- 1) **Innovative Post-Harvest Loss Tools** (Post Harvest concepts 20057, 2000, 20053)
- 2) **Use of Talking Pictures and Other Dairy Decision Making Tools to Increase Milk Yields** (Dairy concepts 10068 and 10034)
- 3) **Improved Animal Draught Power - Through Improved Yoke-Bar Assembly and New Ox-Weeder** (Draught Power concepts 30086, 30004, 30085)
- 4) **Botanical and Integrated Post-Harvest Pest Management** (Post Harvest concepts 20088 and 20018)

It was agreed that the first two applicants would be mentored to finalise their proposals immediately with contracts first and the remaining two teams would then be mentored in April/May with contracts to be signed as soon as the proposals were finalised ideally in late May. The remaining six applicants were then notified that their proposals had not been successful.

### **3.8. REFERENCE CHECKS**

Each of the short-listed applicants was required to provide two references to attest to their technical experience and capacity to implement their project. The Fund Manager then contacted each of these referees and questioned the referee on their views of the applicants (Copies of the reference questionnaire are attached).

### ***3.9. MENTORING WINNING PROPOSAL SUBMITTERS TO ENHANCE AND FINALISE THEIR PROPOSALS FOR CONTRACTING***

Having selected the successful applicants, MUEK then identified a resource person to work with each applicant to mentor them in finalising the proposal. The Fund Manager then contacted these Resource Persons and arranged for them to spend 3-4 days supporting the proposal teams, which included:

- 1) A Desk-Based Review of the Project Proposal and the required changes defined by the External and Platform Assessors to:
  - a. Confirm whether the project was viable and identify any areas of concern;
  - b. Identify further recommendations as to how the proposed activities could be further enhanced particularly in the technically specific areas of each project.
- 2) Providing feedback and guidance to the team through face to face meetings, as well as being available via phone and email to answer follow up questions; and,
- 3) Review and feedback to the team on the revised proposal prior to submission to the Fund Manager.

Having received the revised proposals, the Fund Manager then reviewed the proposals to ensure that all the required changes had been incorporated and also provide further recommendations for improvement regarding the clarity and content of the proposal. The Fund Manager also undertook a detailed review of the budget to ensure that the budget was accurate and realistic. The Fund Manager then met with each applicant to review the proposal and discuss any remaining issues, prior to the finalisation of the proposals. The finalised proposals along with the grantee contracts were then forwarded to the Country Coordinator for final approval.

### ***3.10. CONTRACT ACTIVITY AND FINANCIAL REPORTING FORMATS DESIGNED***

Formats for the grantee contracts, as well as, quarterly activity and financial reports were designed and guidance notes for their completion (please see attached examples).

### ***3.11. GRANTS MANAGEMENT TRAINING DESIGNED***

A one day training programme was developed for the successful applicants covering the following key topics:

- Understanding the Grantee contract
- Quarterly narrative reporting requirements
- Quarterly financial reporting requirements
- Fund disbursement procedure
- Financial controls over projects

The training programme PowerPoint presentation is attached.

### **3.12. GRANTS MANAGEMENT TRAINING**

On April 3rd, two representatives from each of the Talking Pictures and Flour Cyclone Projects attended a training day. The trainees asked a number of questions during the training each of which has been incorporated into the training programme (See attached Training Report).

Training for the two remaining approved projects is planned for the first week in June, following the finalisation of the project proposals and contract signing.

### **3.13. SIGNING OF CONTRACTS**

Originally it had been hoped that grantees would sign the contracts at the end of the grantee training sessions. However, at the time of training EDI had yet to receive a contract extension from NR Int and it was felt that it would be inappropriate to sign contracts with grantees whilst EDI itself was not under contract to RIU. Contracts were subsequently signed with the Talking Pictures and Flour Cyclone project teams in April 2009. Though, at the time of writing the Fund Manager is awaiting receipt of sub-partner agreements from both teams, which must be received before the first funds disbursement will be made.

### **3.14. EDI REQUESTS AND RECEIVES FIRST TRANCHE OF FUNDS FROM NR INT**

Originally, the Fund Manager requested £60,000 for the first disbursement on the assumption that each project would be £80,000 and that there would be 3 projects funded. It was assumed that the first quarter of each project would require approximately 25% of the total budget for set up costs. Money was requested in this manner to ensure that as soon as a proposal was finalised and contracts signed funds could be disbursed. This had been discussed and agreed in principle with NR Int.

However, after further discussion, NR Int could only provide up to £15,000 of ZICF funds as an advance and additional funds would need to be requested on the basis of finalised financial proposals. This advance was duly received on April 3<sup>rd</sup> and paid into EDI's dedicated RIU bank account.

Having finalised the budgets for the first two projects, EDI then submitted the financial proposals along with a funds request to make up the additional funds required for the first quarter's implementation. These funds are yet to be received.

### **3.15. FIRST DISBURSEMENT OF GRANTS FUNDS TO ICF GRANTEES**

The Fund Manager expects to make the first disbursement to first two projects in late May once both grantees have provided the request sub-partner agreements. Once received the Fund Manager will advance to each grantee 5% of the project funds, which will act as a running advance. On receipt of funds from NR Int, the grantee will then be disbursed the full amount for the first quarter. The grantees will maintain this advance to enable them to continue working at the end of each quarter, whilst the Fund Manager reviews quarterly reports and conducts monitoring visits.



## 4. LESSONS LEARNT

The following section summarises the lessons learnt during the first call for ZICF grantees and identifies how these lessons will be incorporated into future calls.

During the implementation of processes for selecting projects to be funded under the first call for Zonal Innovation Challenge Fund (ZICF), a number of lessons were learnt which will be incorporated in to future calls. The following section documents the key lessons learnt and highlights the changes that will be made to future calls<sup>3</sup>.

Originally, the process for the first call had been designed in line with the Demand Led Innovation Process (DLIP)<sup>4</sup>. However, during the course of implementing the first call a number of changes were made to the process by the Country team. Most notably:

- **Targeting of the Call:** The first call was for solutions to address challenges that required higher level solutions and the processes were designed for the review and selection of Higher Level Solution Providers. However, as there had been a strong push to reach grassroots innovators, the Country Coordinator requested that the call should be distributed in a manner that would also reach grassroots level solution providers. Thus the Fund Manager also arranged for the call to sent to all platform members and for posters to be displayed on local notice boards. In addition, to making the application packs available from EDI and MUVEK's offices, via email and online, the Fund Manager also arranged for application packs to be available from Local Government Offices and Agricultural Research Centres in each of target districts.

This decision was agreed by the Country Team, as it was felt that the first call should be open to all potential applicants to enable RIU Tanzania to identify the best concepts and the most qualified applicants from whatever level. Such an approach would also allow the programme to judge the level of interest in the RIU Programme.

However, targeting the call at both grassroots and higher level solution providers resulted in a number of challenges in the review and selection processes, which had been designed for Higher Level applicants, most notably:

- The arrangements for the printing and distribution of posters and application packs to the target areas were took considerably longer and cost more that had been planned and budgeted for;
- Whilst a large number of 'grassroots' applicants did apply the content and quality of these applications was significantly poorer than the higher level applicants and very few grassroots applicants made it past the screening phase. This highlighted more than ever

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<sup>3</sup> Details of the revised fund management processes are provided as an attachment to this document

<sup>4</sup> As described in the RIU Tanzania Implementation Plan.

the importance of having a separate more interactive process with grassroots applicants; and,

- Opening the Call so widely meant that the screening and selection activities took significantly longer putting additional workload on the Fund Manager and the Assessors.

*The Way Forward:*

In all future calls will be targeted at either Higher Level Solution Providers or Grassroots solution Providers and separate processes will be followed for these two types of call (see Appendix).

- **Number of Projects:** When the Fund Manager was contracted to manage the ZICF it was on the assumption that the RIU Tanzania programme would form 6 platforms and the fund would support 1 project from each platform, i.e. a total of 6 projects only. The Fund Manager's budget and timeframes were developed on this assumption. However, in April the RIU Tanzania team began discussions as to whether the ZICF could fund more projects. In principle, the Fund Manager did not disagree with this idea; however, whilst there was some flexibility, the number of projects that could be managed and administered was limited by the available time and budget.

During March 2009, the Country Programme team went through an in-depth strategic review which included a review of the first call of ZICF and identification of ways to improve the subsequent rounds. At this time it was agreed that the number of projects should be increased from 6 to 16, with:

- **Six Higher Level Solution Provider Led Projects** – To include 4 of the projects identified in the first round and 2 further projects to be advertised in the new financial year;
- **Ten Grassroots Level Solution Provider Led Projects** – An average budget of £20,000 would be assigned to the grassroots level projects which would be targeted at the district level platforms and are expected to be 1 year projects. With 5 projects occurring in 2009/10 and an additional 5 projects occurring in 2010/11.

It was also agreed that as the whole Country Team should be more involved in the selection activities (and budgets and plans revised accordingly) to allow the Fund Manager to focus the management and administration of the fund (as per its terms of reference).

*The Way Forward:*

As a result of this increase in projects (as well as the other issues raised in this report) two 'new' processes were designed to increase the efficiency and effectiveness of future calls and to ensure that the 16 projects were manageable. A description of the revised funds management processes and the rationale behind them is provided in the appendices.

- **Research Outputs** – At the time of issuing the call, the direction from the UK, Uganda and Country Programme was very much for a demand led approach and pushing of RNRRS Research outputs onto applicants was discouraged. Thus the call only provided RNRRS outputs as examples of the potential research that could be put into use, but left the way open for research from other

programmes and organisations to be funded. As result the majority of the short-listed projects did not incorporate an RNRRS output.

However, by the time of the final selection meetings which followed the Africa Country Programme meeting in Rwanda, the focus had changed and there was strong push towards getting large numbers of RNRRS outputs into use. Because of this new focus, the Country Coordinator then insisted that wherever possible that the winning proposals be revised to incorporate at least one RNRRS.

As a result the time taken for the revision/finalisation of proposals was significantly extended as the RIU team needed time to identify potential RNRRS outputs and the Proposal Teams then needed time to review them and to incorporate them into their project activities;

There was also a risk that the proposal teams would accept whatever RNRRS was proposed and they might not necessarily have a strong enough understanding of the research output. In the end only two of the four teams were required to add RNRRS outputs which were found to be completely complementary to their project.

#### *The Way Forward:*

Whilst not all platform challenges can necessarily be addressed by an RNRRS, in future calls it has been agreed, that wherever possible, applicants will be required to use at least one RNRRS. So, for all future calls once a platform challenge has been identified, the MUVK team will review the catalogue of RNRRS outputs and identify any that have the potential to solve the challenge. If such RNRRS outputs are found, then the call will specifically highlight them and will require that applicants propose concepts that utilise at least one RNRRS. The call will not preclude applicants from utilising other complementary non-RNRRS outputs alongside an RNRRS output. If no RNRRS outputs are found to be relevant, then the Country Team will make a decision on a case by case basis.

- **Platform Participation** – The DLIP envisaged that a selection of platform members would be involved the selection of the winning solutions. In implementing the process:
  - Originally, it had been planned that platform members would participate in the Concept Note selection activities alongside NIC members and other external experts as advisors. However, the Country Coordinator decided that the Concept Note selection committee should be made up of only independent (i.e. non-platform members) assessors, including NIC members and external experts. This approach worked well as efficient way of weeding out weaker, technically poor concepts and the committee short-listed the applicants to be invited to prepare full proposals
  - Once submitted, the full proposals were then reviewed by the two NIC members and one representative of each platform and two proposals were short-listed for each platform.
  - It had then been planned that the short-listed projects would be presented at full platform meetings to allow the platforms to vote for the most appropriate projects. For the sake of costs this was expected to happen at an already planned platform meeting (including RIU

launches in each region). However, these platform meetings were subsequently postponed by the Country Coordinator due to budget constraints. Instead, 5 representatives of each platform were invited to attend a platform review meeting and identify which of the two projects was the highest priority for their platform. (See Section 3.6).

In hindsight, it was agreed that the Platform Representatives in future should be involved in the Concept Note Selection Activities.

*The Way Forward:*

In future rounds, the Concept Notes will be reviewed by an external selection committee to remove unviable concepts; the remaining concepts will then be put to the platform that will be select one winning concept (or combination of concepts). This and only this concept team will then work with a resource person (i.e. an expert in the relevant field) and RIU team members to develop a full project plan and budget. At present, the plan is to present the all short-listed concepts to the full Coast Platform for the next call (which was issued on May 15<sup>th</sup>). However, this will be dependent on the available budget and it may be that a smaller representative group of platform members will be identified to select the successful concept.

- **Preparation of Full Proposals** – In the first round, on conclusion of the Concept Note selection a total of 10 concepts (3 for Post Harvest and Draught Power and 4 for Dairy) were shortlisted and all were invited to prepare full proposals. As a result a second round of selection activities was required, which involved a second full selection committee and then a platform review meeting.

The winning teams were then provided with a list of changes that needed to be made to their proposals (including the addition of RNRRS outputs) and were supported in finalising their proposals by a Resource Person who provided technical advice on improving their project and the Fund Manager who ensured that the proposals were complete and accurate.

The second round selection activities followed by the recommendations for further changes to the proposals added significant time and costs to the process. Whilst the final proposals were significantly improved from the original submissions it was felt that in future rounds the process could be more efficient.

*The Way Forward:*

In future rounds, the Concept Note selection activities only one successful concept be selected (or combination of complementary concepts and teams to form a stronger solution). For the winning concept the Assessors, Platform Members and Country Team shall identify specific recommendations for the development of the project plans and budgets, including (but not limited to) recommendations for specific activities, identification of any additional RNRRS outputs that could be included, requirements for any changes in the team composition etc.

These will be documented by the Fund Manager and a briefing meeting will be held with the concept team, RIU team members and an appropriate Resource Person (to be identified by MUVK). This meeting will provide an opportunity to introduce the RIU proposal templates and to

ensure that the team fully understand RIUs requirements for their projects. It will also provide an opportunity for the whole group to brainstorm ideas for the project.

The Resource Person will then work with the team to develop their project plan and budget and will review and give feedback on draft versions of the proposal. The Proposal will then be submitted to the RIU Country Coordinator and her team for review and feedback. Once the proposal has been approved by the Country Coordinator, the Fund Manager will then take over and finalise the proposals.

- **Selection of Resource Person** – The Platform Assessor who attended the Full Proposal Assessment session for the dairy platform proposals, was found to have a wealth of knowledge of the dairy sector in Tanzania. Given his expertise he was a logical choice to be the Resource Person to assist the Talking Pictures proposal team in enhancing their project and also assist linking the project with other initiatives in the region. The Country Coordinator asked him to take on this role and he agreed.

Unfortunately, we were not aware at the time that there were some significant personality issues between him and his colleagues at Tanzania Dairy Cooperative Union and one of the key team members. The Resource Person then immediately tried to get this person rejected from the project team, but despite follow up from various members of the RIU Country Team no valid reason was given as to why this person should be removed. The Resource Person had known that this person was involved in the project before agreeing to be assist the proposal team and at no point during the selection activities were any concerns raised.

This put the whole RIU team in a difficult position, as we received pressure to force this person off the team or the Resource Person and TDCU would not cooperate with the project but were given no reason as to why. His fellow team members had worked with him before and were confident that he was the right person for the project. To explore the issue further the Country Coordinator invited the team members to Dar es Salaam, by this time the Resource Person had informed the Country Coordinator that he was withdrawing from the process. The Country Team then met with the Project Team to discuss this issue. After discussions, the country team were satisfied that the original project team were more than capable of implementing the project and it was then agreed that the project would proceed.

- **Changes to tools** – Generally, the tools developed by the Fund Manager proved effective in the first round. Some minor changes have been made to the templates to avoid confusion. For example, the word solution was confused by applicants to mean the Research Output rather than the proposed project. In subsequent calls each tool will be reviewed to ensure that it remains relevant for the focus of the call and where necessary amendments will be made.

*The Way Forward:*

Tools will be continually reviewed and updated, as required, to ensure that they meet the needs of each individual call.

## 5. APPENDICES

The following documents are provided in separate files as appendices to this report:

- 1) Full Proposal Review and Assessment Sheets and Instructions to Assessors
- 2) Summaries of Selection Committee Meeting
- 3) Summaries of Short-Listed Projects
- 4) Summaries of Platform Review Meetings
- 5) Full Proposals
- 6) Training Report
- 7) Contract Template (including Quarterly Financial and Narrative Reporting Templates)
- 8) Fund Manager Terms of Reference (Revised)
- 9) Revised Strategy for Subsequent ZICF Funding Rounds
- 10) Call for Concept Notes, Concept Note Format and Instructions to Applicants for Second Call – Coast Platform