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**International Association for Community Development (IACD):  
A Needs Assessment of E-bulletin Subscribers**

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## Executive Summary

International Association for Community Development is an international NGO working to promote social justice through community development. It has more than 3500 subscribers for its free monthly E-bulletin, but only 331 are paid members. IACD likes to find out how to reduce this free-riding issue and get more paid members. Based on this background, a needs assessment online survey was conducted. In this report, recommendations are provided for IACD according to the survey findings. IACD could provide online training, international tour and more networking opportunities for paid members. For members whose membership is going to expire, IACD could send out reminder message twice to remind them to renew their membership. In addition, more convenient membership fee payment method can also be explored to increase the number of paid members.

## Background

### Free-rider problem

The “free-rider problem” occurs when individuals get the benefit of a public good without paying their fair share of cost.<sup>1</sup> David Hume was among the first theorists to address the free rider problem associated with public goods. He argued that people are mainly motivated by their own interests. In order to show how people act in a group, he gave an example of two neighbors’ agreement on draining a meadow possessed by them in

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<sup>1</sup> E.C. Pasour, “The Free Rider as a Basis for Government Intervention,” *The Journal of Libertarian Studies*, Vol. V, No. 4 (Fall 1981), [http://mises.org/journals/jls/5\\_4/5\\_4\\_6.pdf](http://mises.org/journals/jls/5_4/5_4_6.pdf).

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common. They know that if anyone of them fails their part, then the project will definitely fail. However, if a thousand people want to agree on any such action, it would be very difficult for them to act upon it because each person would try to lay the burden on other people.<sup>2</sup> Here according to this example, Hume recognized the conflict between individual and collective interests and the role of free-riding behavior in the conflict. The example also demonstrates that smaller groups are more likely to succeed than larger ones.

Mancur Olson also has to be referred to when the issue of free riding is discussed. He strongly recognized the existence of free-riding when he wrote:

If the individuals in a group altruistically disregarded their personal welfare, it would not be very likely that collectively they would seek some selfish common or group objective. Such altruism, is, however, considered exceptional, and self-interested behavior is usually thought to be the rule, at least when economic issues are at stake; no one is surprised when individual businessmen seek higher profits, when individual workers seek higher wages, or when individual consumers seek lower prices. The idea that groups tend to act in support of their group interests is supposed to follow logically from this widely accepted premise of rational, self-interested behavior.<sup>3</sup>

Interpretation of this passage suggests that individuals are mostly driven by self-interest. Individuals join group with a purpose, which is just very similar to what social psychologist Professor Leon Festinger said: "The attraction of group membership is not so

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<sup>2</sup> Keith L. Dougherty, "Public Goods Theory from Eighteenth Century Political Philosophy to Twentieth Century Economics," *Public Choice* 117: 239-253, 2003.

<sup>3</sup> Mancur Olson, "The Logic of Collective Action: Public Goods and the Theory of Groups," *Harvard Economic Studies*, Volume CXXIV. P.1.

much in sheer belonging, but rather in attaining something by means of this membership.<sup>4</sup> Olson also stated that free-riding is most likely to happen in larger organizations. He made an analogy between the relationship of individuals in an organization and the relationship of firms in a perfectly competitive market. In this kind of market, firms would foresee that if they all increase their output, then the price would fall. They wouldn't begin this kind of chain of price-reducing production. However, in the real world, things don't work this way. If the number of involved firms is large, then the price effect brought with output increase by one firm could barely be seen. In this way, no firm would change its plan of increasing production. For a large organization, it is the same. The burden for any other dues payer would not be noticeably increased by the loss of one dues payer. Therefore, a rational person would not believe that his/her withdrawal from an organization would drive others to do the same thing.

### *Why free-riding is a problem*

According to Olson, in a small organization, if one person stops paying for the collective goods, then the other members may stop paying the cost too and the collective good may be no longer provided. However, it is also possible that the same person can realize the consequences of his/her refusal to pay can cause. He/she would be worse off when the collective good is not provided any more compared to the cost he/she has to pay. Based on this realization, he/she might choose to continue paying, but there is also a chance that he/she might not. In a large group, no single person's contribution makes a huge difference to the group as a whole. A collective good will not be provided unless there

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<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, P.12.

is coercion or some outside inducements that will force the group members to act for their common interest. Of course, the relation between the size of a group and the significance of an individual is much more complex than this.<sup>5</sup> A group with highly unequal degrees of interest in collective good and values the good more than the cost is more likely to provide it.<sup>6</sup>

Pareto efficiency refers to “a given economic arrangement is efficient if there can be no arrangement which will leave someone better off without worsening the position of others.”<sup>7</sup> Besides whether an organization can provide the collective good or not, Olson stated it is also very important to see if the collective good available to the organization is Pareto-optimal or not. He said that a group composed of members of unequal size and unequal fraction will show less of a tendency toward suboptimality (and be more likely to provide itself with some amount of a collective good) than an otherwise identical group composed of members of equal size because some members could benefit more from the services and they tend to contribute to get the services provided.<sup>8</sup> If the problem of free-riding occurs, then it is for sure that Pareto efficiency will not be obtained. The provision of public goods often faces the social dilemma which most of the time is described as an n-person Prisoner’s dilemma (PD). According to Taylor and Ward, the free-rider problem can be regarded as a Prisoner’s dilemma when the following conditions are met and defection is a dominant strategy:

- No player can profitably provide any of the good by himself/herself;

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<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, P.43-45.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, P. 12.

<sup>7</sup> Musgrave, *Public Finance*, P. 67.

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*, P. 29.

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- If all players contribute, each player's welfare is improved;
- Each player does the best for himself/herself by free riding while the other(s) contributes.<sup>910</sup>

The 2×2 PD game often used to illustrate the interaction among group members is basically like this:

		player 1	
		C	D
player 2	C	3, 3	1, 4
	D	4, 1	2, 2

In this model, D refers to defection or non-cooperation. C refers to co-operation. C is dominated by D for each player. Since D is the dominant strategy, (D, D) will be the only equilibrium for the rational players, which is Pareto-inferior (inferior to (C, C)). D is the dominant strategy which means that: a) neither individual finds it profitable to provide the good alone; and b) the benefit to a player when the good is provided by the other player alone exceeds the benefit obtained from joint co-operation less the costs. It is also possible that one large player can profitably provide the good alone. For example, in one industry, one large player can pay by itself alone to get some legislation passed because the benefits it can get will exceed the costs it pays. However, for small players in the industry, the benefit for them with the passage of the legislation is smaller than the cost they pay, so they prefer not to pay.

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<sup>9</sup> Matthew Breier and Martine Visser, "The Free Rider Problem in Community-Based Rural Water Supply: A Game Theoretic Analysis," Southern Africa Labour and Development Research Unit.

<sup>10</sup> Douglas D. Heckathorn, "The Dynamics and Dilemmas of Collective Action," *American Sociological Review*, Vol. 61, No. 2 (Apr., 1996), P. 250-277.

Now let's turn to the  $n$ -person generalization of the game. For the Prisoner's game, when D is the dominant strategy, universal non-cooperation is the only equilibrium and the outcome. If  $k$  people out of  $n$  people co-operate and the collective goods are provided, the cooperators are better off than if they choose not to co-operate. The rest of the people who do not cooperate but benefit from the collective goods are free riders.<sup>11</sup> This echoes the claims that free-riding is more likely to happen in large organizations, as an individual in small organizations knows that his action will affect the action of the others, while in large organizations, an individual is likely to allow others to provide the good while he/she enjoys a "free ride."<sup>12</sup>

### **Freeriding problem faced by IACD**

#### *Introduction to IACD*

The International Association for Community Development (IACD) is a not-for-profit, non-governmental organization based in Scotland dedicated to building and supporting a global network of people and organizations working toward social justice and equity through the practice of participatory community development.

#### *Free riders*

IACD publishes a monthly E-bulletin and disseminates the E-bulletin free of charge to any individual or organizations who sign up with their email addresses. Besides E-bulletin, IACD provides additional services and benefits for paid members including:

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<sup>11</sup> Michael Taylor and Hugh Ward, "Chickens, Whales, and Lumpy Goods: Alternative Models of Public-Goods Provision," *Political Studies*, Vol. XXX, No. 3 (350-370).

<sup>12</sup> E.C. Pasour, "The Free Rider as a Basis for Government Intervention," *The Journal of Libertarian Studies*, Vol. V, No. 4 (Fall 1981), [http://mises.org/journals/jls/5\\_4/5\\_4\\_6.pdf](http://mises.org/journals/jls/5_4/5_4_6.pdf).

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- Discounted rates at IACD international conferences (up to 4 places for each organization member);
- Discounted subscriptions to the international Community Development Journal;
- Opportunities to share your work and experiences with a global audience, through our website, E-bulletins, newsletters and other publications;
- Opportunities to connect with others and to shape the direction of IACD by joining one of our task forces or working groups;
- Access to restricted areas of the IACD website, with opportunities for learning and practice exchange.

Although now there are over 3,500 subscribers of the E-bulletin, only 331 are paid members, among which 290 are individual members and 41 are organizational members. Since IACD is a non-profit organization, it needs more money to survive and do a better job regarding to community development. IACD suspects that the problem of free riding exists among the E-bulletin subscribers because they can receive the monthly E-bulletin without paying any cost. Based on this assumption, IACD wants to find out whether free riders exist. Besides the issue of free-riding, IACD also wants to know other reasons why the non-paying IACD members haven't chosen to become paid members and what would encourage them to do so and whether measures could be taken to attract more paid members. In addition, some non-paying members were actually paid members before, but they did not renew their membership. Reasons also need to be found out about why they did not renew their membership status. For paid members, they receive special services and benefits from IACD. In order to keep them, it is good to know what services and benefits they value



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the most and what additional services and benefits they would like to have as a member. In addition, IACD would like to know if non-paying members are interested in contributing to IACD in ways other than financially. Based on these questions, a needs assessment is conducted for the E-bulletin subscribers to see if there are potential problems that need to be solved.

IACD The membership fee is as follows:

**Table1. IACD individual membership fee**

	Individual Membership			Student
	One Year	Three Years	Life Membership	
Non-OECD countries	£15	£30	£150	
OECD countries	£30	£60	£300	£10 per year

**Table2. IACD organizational membership fee**

	Organization Membership					
	Turnover > £100,000		£100,000 ≤ turnover ≤ £500,000		Turnover < £500,000	
	One Year	Three Years	One Year	Three Years	One Year	Three Years
Non-OECD countries	£50	£100	£75	£150	£150	£300
OECD countries	£100	£200	£150	£300	£300	£600

### *Program Theory & Design*

IACD only has email addresses for the E-bulletin subscribers without knowing their names and countries where they reside in. Therefore, basically the only way we can do the assessment is through email. We decide to conduct an online survey through email to all of the E-bulletin subscribers on the email list.

Online survey research is still young. It has some advantages compared to traditional surveys. First, it can reach to a large population at low cost. As long as the survey sample has access to internet, they can do the survey. The ability to conduct large-scale data collection saves researchers a lot of time. They can just email the survey to thousands of people at the same time no matter where their physical locations are. Second, it greatly decreases delivery and response time; Schaefer and Dillman recorded that 76% of all responses were received in no more than 4 days.<sup>13</sup> Third, with some online surveys, the response data can be automatically stored and the researcher just needs to retrieve it.

However, online surveys also have disadvantages. One major concern is low response rate. According to Petchenik and Watermolen, online survey response rates are 11% lower than that of mail and phone surveys on average and rates as low as 2% have been reported<sup>14</sup>. Surveys with high response rates can provide more certainty that the findings are representative. On the other hand, findings from surveys with low response rate can face nonresponse error (it refers to the bias that occurs when respondents to a survey are different from those who do not respond regarding to their demographic and

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<sup>13</sup> Schaefer D.R. and D.A. Dillman, "Development of a Standard E-mail Methodology: Results of an Experiment," *Public Opinion Quarterly*, 62, 378-397.

<sup>14</sup> Martha C. Monroe and Damian C. Adams, "Increasing Response Rates to Web-Based Surveys," *Journal of Extension*, December 2012, Vol. 50, No. 6.

attitudinal characteristics<sup>15</sup>) because big differences might exist between respondents and the people who do not respond. The findings might not capture the characteristics of the people who do not complete the survey. Ignorance of non-respondents leads to uncertainty about the validity of the results.

Low response rate of online surveys could come from a variety of factors, including the design format of the survey, length of the survey, survey samples' availability of internet and topic salience of the survey to survey samples. Despite these factors that contribute to the low response rate, some measures have been found to be able to increase the response rate, which include personalized email invitations, pre-notification of the survey, survey incentive and follow-up reminders.<sup>16</sup>

Based on the factors mentioned above, when we conducted the survey, we adopted several measures to increase the response rate:

First, we controlled the survey length. Studies<sup>17</sup> have mixed results on the influence of survey length on the response rate. Some have shown that survey length affects response rate negatively, some have shown positive relationship and some have shown no relationship. Based on this, our survey is designed to have 15 questions in total with 9 multiple choice questions and 6 open-ended questions. 8 multiple choice questions are required to answer and 1 open-ended question is required to answer.

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<sup>15</sup> Linda J. Sax, Shannon K. Gilmartin and Alyssa N. Bryant, "Assessing Response Rates and Nonresponse Bias in Web and Paper Surveys," *Research in Higher Education*, Vol. 44, No. 4, August 2003.

<sup>16</sup> Martha C. Monroe and Damian C. Adams, "Increasing Response Rates to Web-Based Surveys," *Journal of Extension*, December 2012, Vol. 50, No. 6.

<sup>17</sup> *Ibid.*

Second, in order to make sure the survey works fine, a pilot test was conducted and the survey was sent out to the board members of IACD first. After the pilot test, the survey was sent out in Google Form in mid-March and the deadline for respondents to return the survey was the 4<sup>th</sup> of April.

Third, follow-up contact is made. Studies<sup>18</sup> show that follow-up contact could increase response rate. When we conducted the survey, we sent out a reminder email about half month after the survey was sent out.

Fourth, incentives could increase response rate. A prize draw for a one-year individual IACD membership is set up for the IACD Stakeholder Survey. After respondents finish their survey, they can choose to leave their email address to participate the draw.

However, despite all of the efforts we took to increase response rate, it is still possible that the survey will have very low response rate because we did not send out pre-survey notification, which studies<sup>19</sup> have found has positive relations with the response rate. The topic of the survey is not highly salient. When people receive the survey, they might just disregard it. It is also possible that the email addresses on the list are out of use.

### *Structure of the survey*

According to Priscilla Salant and Don A. Dillman<sup>20</sup>, several issues should be considered when a survey is designed. First, the questions asked should provide useful and accurate information. In order to get accurate and effective information, the survey is

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<sup>18</sup> Yammarino, F. J., Skinner, S., & Childers, T. L. (1991), "Understanding mail survey response behavior," *Public Opinion Quarterly*, 55, p.613–639.

<sup>19</sup> Kim Bartel Sheenhan, "E-mail Survey Response Rates: A Review," *Journal of Computer-Mediated Communication*, Vol. 6, Issue 2, P.0, January 2001.

<sup>20</sup> Priscilla Salant & Don A. Dillman, "How to Conduct Your Own Survey," John Wiley & Sons, Inc., 1994.

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designed like this: first, respondents are asked whether they are a paid member (individual and organizational), previous paid member or nonpaying member. Based on their answer, they are asked different questions to find out what the paid members value the most about the services and benefits provided by IACD, why nonpaying members choose not to become a paid member and why previous paid members did not renew their membership. Besides this, they are also asked if they'd like to contribute to IACD as a volunteer to write blogs, to act as an IACD "country correspondent" (e.g. sharing information on community development activities in your country, building membership etc.) or to write practice case studies. Additional questions are also asked to find if they would be interested in seeing IACD as a clearinghouse and sharing their resume/CV.

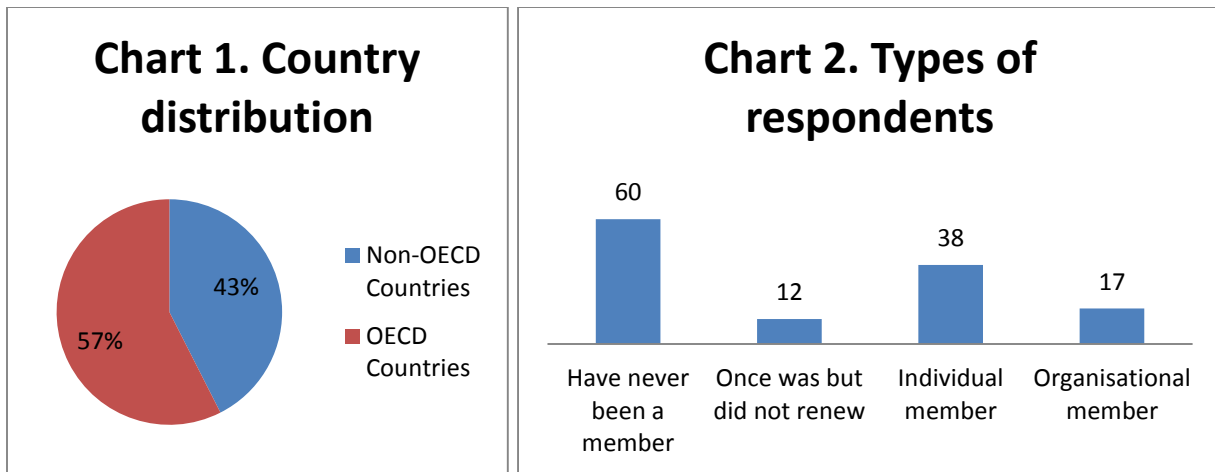
Based on the structure, in total all respondents are asked 15 questions. The first 3 questions are common questions for all people. They are asked what sectors they are working in, what their main work is and what type of organizations they work in. Then they are asked if they are a paying member, previous member and non-paying member of IACD. Based on their answer, they are asked different questions on the reasons for their choice of their membership status. Then for the second half of the survey, they are asked the same questions again on whether they'd like to see membership fee increase or to donate money, whether they'd like to contribute to IACD to be its country correspondent or blogger or to share their story, whether they'd like to submit their resume/CV to an IACD clearinghouse and how do they see the field of community development evolve in the next ten years.

Based on the results of the survey, recommendations are made in this report for IACD to increase its members and to better serve its members and do a better job.

## Findings

In this section, survey results are analyzed. The survey was sent to 2929 people on IACD email list (out of more than 3500 E-bulletin subscribers). The reason why it was not sent out to the supposed more than 3500 people is because the system cleans up the list - some people have since unsubscribed or their e-mails bounced (over quota or had a spam filter) or were incorrect, there were duplicates or they did not confirm their subscription. Of the 2929 people, 695 people opened the email; only 253 opened the survey link and 127 completed the survey, which means that the survey has a response rate of 4% (127 people out of 2929 people). The following analysis is based on feedback from the 127 respondents.

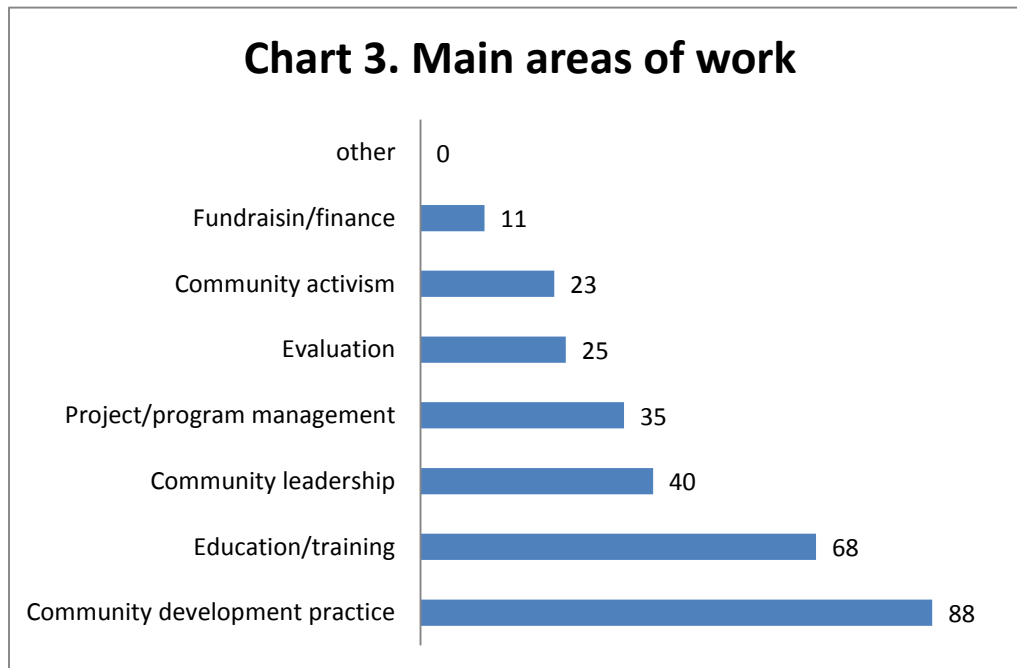
### *Country distribution of the respondents*



Among the respondents, 73 (57%) are from OECD countries and 54 (43%) are from non-OECD countries. In total 60 (47%) respondents have never been an IACD paid member; 12 (10%) respondents were IACD members before, but have not renewed their

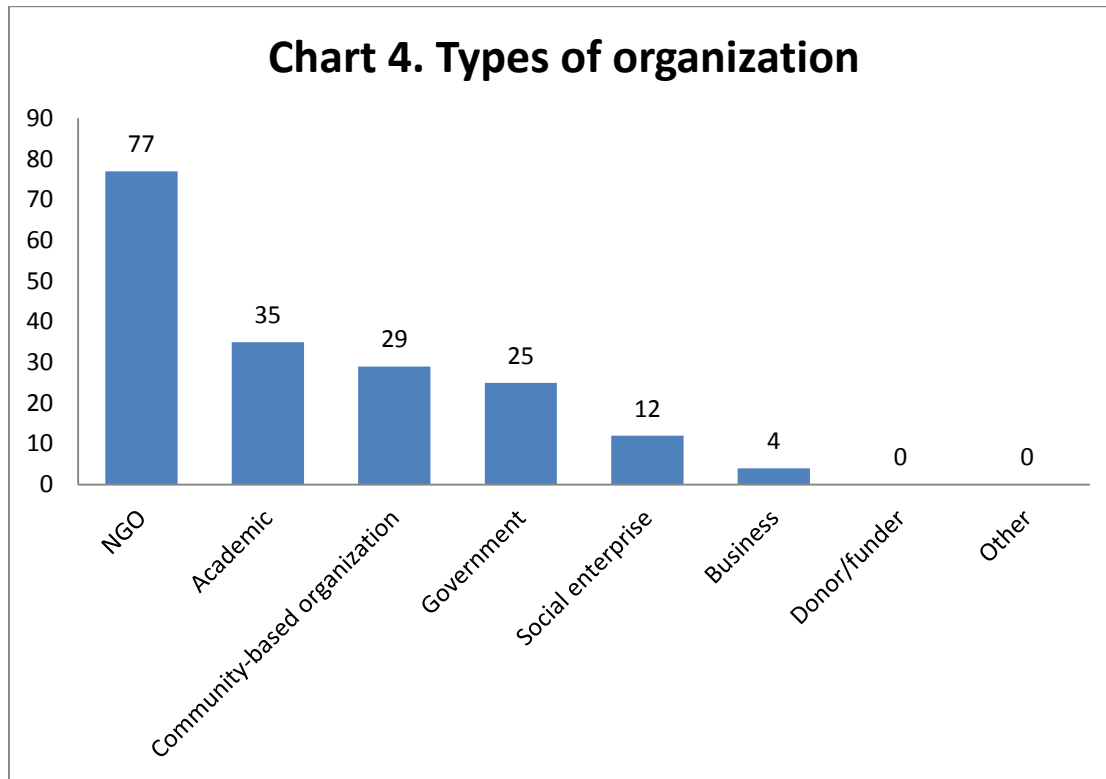
membership after expiration; 38 (30%) respondents are individual members and 17 (13%) respondents are organizational members.

*Main areas of work*



For these 127 respondents, 88 say that their main work is involved in community development practice, 68 choose education/training as one of their main work areas, 40 are involved mainly in community leadership, and 35 respondents' main work is project/program management.

*Types of Organization Respondents work for*



For the types of organization the respondents work in, it is not a required question for them to answer. In total, 125 people responded. Since people can choose more than one answer at one time, some respondents chose two even three organizations at the same time. From Chart 4 it can be seen that most of the respondents work in an NGO and a good proportion of them work in academic areas and community-based organization.

## **Findings Related to Paid Members**

### *Most Useful Services and Benefits for Paid Members*

In order to find out what benefits and services IACD paid members value the most, we asked the question: “Of the following services and benefits, which do you find the most



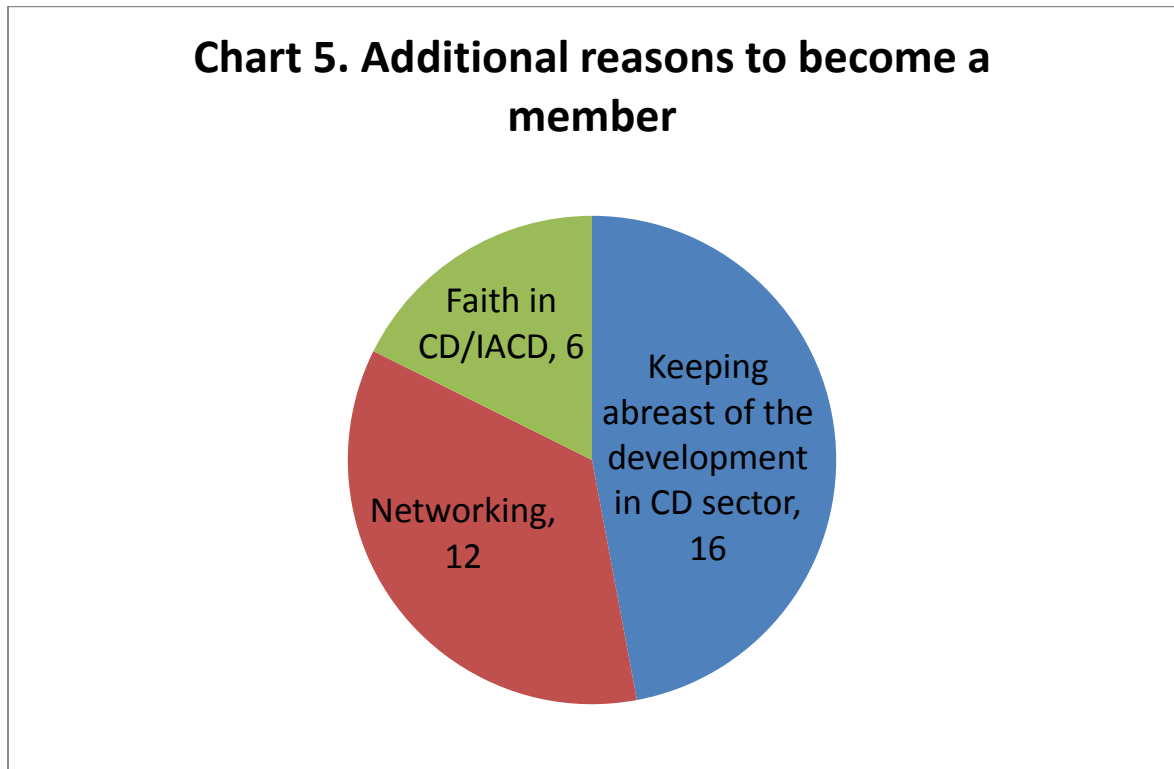
useful?” Seven choices are provided and they can choose more than one answer. They are also asked to list any other reasons to become a paid member open-endedly in the next question.

**Table3. Services and benefits paid-members value the most**

Opportunities to learn about community development practice around the world through our website and publications such as Practice Insights (51/55)	51
Opportunities to share your work and experiences with a global audience, through our website, E-bulletins and other publications (30/55)	30
Besides monthly E-bulletin, special email updates about issues of particular interest to IACD members (27/55)	27
Opportunities to connect with others and to shape the direction of IACD by joining one of our task forces or working groups (23/55)	23
Discounted rates at IACD international conferences (17/55)	17
Discounted subscriptions to the international Community Development Journal (12/55)	12
Access to restricted areas of the IACD website, with opportunities for learning and practice exchange (9/55)	9
Other (0/55)	0

From Table 3 it can be seen that among the 55 paid member respondents, 51 picked “opportunities to learn about community development practice around the world through our website and publications such as Practice Insights” as the most valuable benefit; 30 think that “Opportunities to share your work and experiences with a global audience, through our website, E-bulletins and other publications” are most useful; 27 chose “Besides monthly E-bulletin, special email updates about issues of particular interest to IACD members” and 23 regard “Opportunities to connect with others and to shape the direction of IACD by joining one of our task forces or working groups” as valuable.

*Additional reasons to become a paid member*



For additional reasons to become a member, the question is optional, so not everyone provided an answer. In total 34 out of the 55 paid members shared their additional reasons to become a paid member. Among these 34 respondents, 16 people list “keeping abreast of development in CD sector” as additional reasons; 12 people listed only networking opportunity as additional reason to become an IACD paid member; and 6 people simply said they have faith in IACD/CD so they would like to be supportive.

### *Additional desirable benefits*

34 paid-members provided answers for the question “If resources were available, what additional benefits would you like IACD to provide to paid members?” The distribution of the answers is shown in table 4:

**Table4. Additional desirable services and benefits for paid members**

Sponsorship for conference/project	8
More local networking opportunities	6
Training to members	6
Study tour	3
Access to more key meetings	2
Holding more conference	2
Regional E-forum	1
Webinar	1
Quarterly policy briefing	1
More CD experience from other countries or organizations	1
Standard development for CD practitioner accreditation	1
More actively promote social justice through international participation through NGOs or UN	1
Serve as clearinghouse	1

8 respondents hope that IACD could sponsor them to attend conferences or sponsor them in their project, among which one respondent says that members should be exempt of charge to publish articles in Community Development Journal. 6 people express desire for more networking opportunities, including sharing member information at the national level. 6 people hope IACD could provide some kind of training to members in their regions. 4 people expect IACD to hold more conferences, 2 of which say IACD could have E-form or webinar. 3 people think an international tour about CD would be desirable.

## Findings Related to Previous Members Who Did Not Renew Their Membership

### *Reasons why previous members did not renew their membership*

Among the 127 respondents, 12 claim that they were IACD member before but did not renew their membership. In order to find out the reasons why they did not renew the membership, a multiple choice question “please indicate why you did not renew your membership” is asked. The distribution of the reasons is shown in the following table.

**Table5. Reasons why previous members did not renew their membership**

Forgot to renew and/or did not notice the renewal reminder message	7
Free access to E-bulletin and other information even if I am not a paid member	4
None of the listed reasons	3
Change of job – no longer in the field of community development	2
Not good value for money	1
Better services from other similar organizations	0

According to Table 5, 7 respondents out of 12 chose “Forgot to renew and/or did not notice the renewal reminder message” as the reason; 4 respondents chose “Free access to E-bulletin and other information even if I am not a paid member”, which shows that a certain degree of free-riding exists in the previous members who did not renew their membership; 3 people did not choose any of the reasons. In the following question “please explain your choice or give other reasons”, further answers given by two of these three people are: am financially down, meager income though still in CD area. The third person

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does not give any further explanation. 2 people stated the reason is change of job and 1 person said it is not good value for money for not renewing their membership.

Since 7 out of 12 respondents say that they forgot to renew and/or did not notice the renewal reminder message, IACD could send out reminder messages twice instead of once. In addition, from time to time, messages should be sent out to remind people to update their email address to IACD when they switch to a new email address so that they could receive the reminder to renew their membership. Also, IACD needs to make sure that the reminder email it sends out does not have spam words; otherwise, the email will go to the spam folder.

### *Additional Reasons for not renewing the membership*

Except the reasons above, 5 people provided additional reasons for not renewing their membership. 2 people say they would renew their membership soon. One thinks that “I keep updated via the website and various emails without being a paid member.” The fourth person claims that “It is not a priority to renew the membership for one person” and the fifth person states that “no reason to become a paid member”. When asked what would encourage them to renew the membership, 8 people provided answers, which are shown in table 6:

**Table6. What would encourage you to renew your membership?**

If the Organization can provide technical support for my Organization.
I am not sure.
An income.

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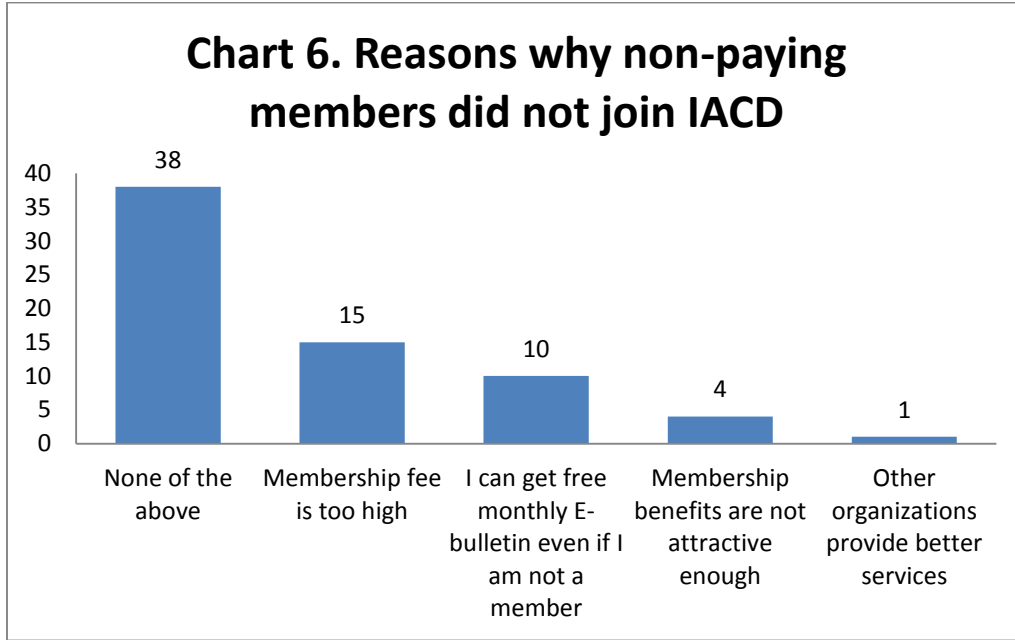
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Regular update of activities by the IACD and rich resources
Opportunities to interact with CD peers. Maybe through a series of webinars?
Playing an active role
I am already encouraged I just need to remember to do it. Thanks and sorry
If there is a platform to exchange the ideas and seek solution for our problems from other nations, it may encourage me to renew it.

From the table it can be seen that one person will renew it. Like suggestions about additional desirable benefits mentioned by two paid members, one previous member also brings up webinars. One person mentions that members should play an active role. The platform to exchange the ideas and seek solution from other countries is a good suggestion because IACD now does not have a platform for people to communicate directly. Other answers do not seem to provide a lot of information and are not feasible like an income and technical support provision.

### **Findings Related to Non-Paying Members**

One main purpose of the survey is to find out the reasons why a lot of E-bulletin subscribers do not apply to become IACD members. In total, 60 respondents are non-paying members who have never been an IACD member. For this group of people, we listed 5 reasons why they have not joined IACD for them to choose. The results are shown in the following chart:



15 respondents think the fee is too high. Among these 15 respondents, 5 are from OECD countries and 10 are from Non-OECD countries. For the 5 respondents from OECD countries who think the fee is too high, 3 also list “I can still get free E-bulletin even if I am not a member” as another reason. 9 of the 10 Non-OECD country respondents list high fee as the only reason. 4 respondents think the benefits are not attractive; 10 are free-riders; they think even if they are not a member, they can still get free monthly E-bulletin. Only 1 respondent said other organizations provide better services. Surprisingly 38 people respondents have reasons other than the four mentioned above (Membership fee is too high, I can get free monthly E-bulletin even if I am not a member, the benefits are not attractive enough and other organizations provide better services ). Since 38 is a large number, the next paragraph will analyze specifically the reasons provided by these 38

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people in the following question “please explain your choice or give other reasons” to see more potential reasons why they are not paid members.

Actually upon closer analysis (Appendix 2), among these 38 respondents, 8 are quite likely to become members. Their answers indicate that they either will apply very soon or they just haven't taken time to finish it. 19 respondents have the potential to become members, of which 9 people state that they don't know much about IACD and the costs and benefits of membership and 6 claim money converting and transferring as the reason why they are still not IACD members yet, especially for people in rural areas of developing countries. In fact, one person says he/she is in the process of making a Western Union Transfer to become a member. 2 of the 19 potential members say they maybe now should consider joining IACD after this survey. 3 of the respondents have limited financial ability. When answers to the next question “What would encourage you to become a member” targeted at non-paying members are examined, lower membership fee and convenient payment are two incentives which would encourage them to become a member.

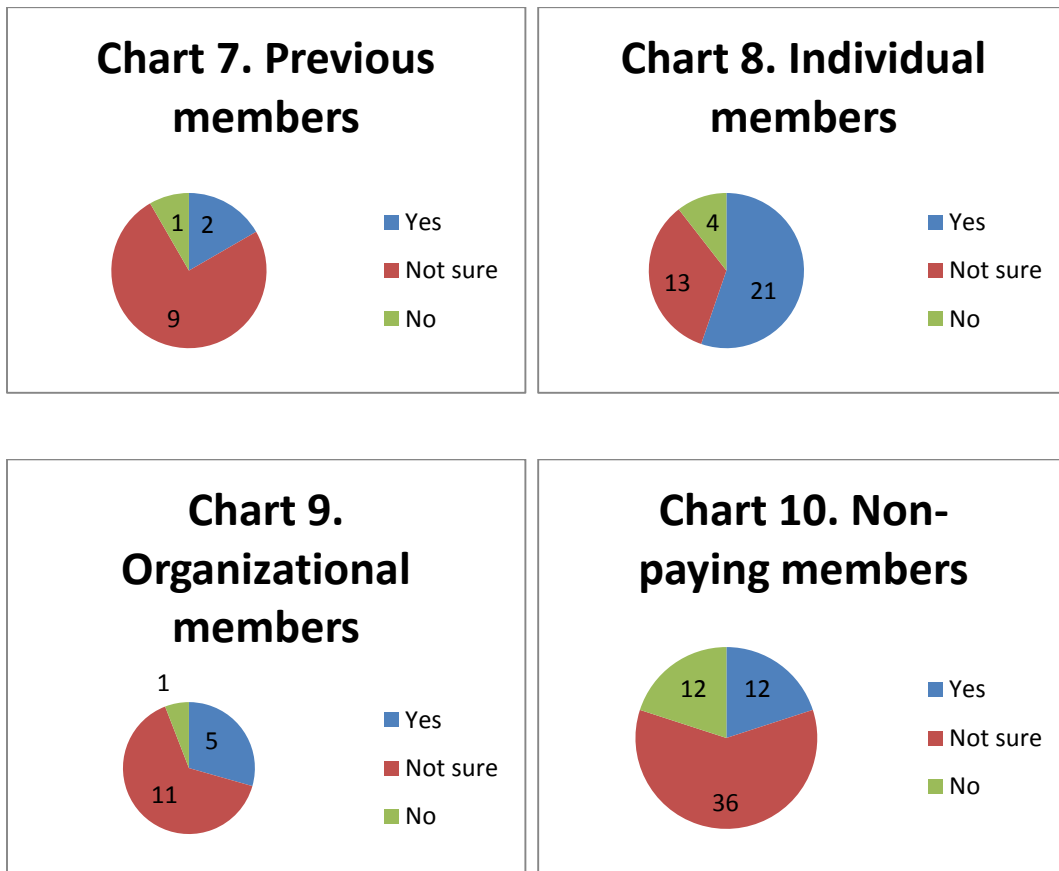
Based on the situation, every month, when IACD sends out the E-bulletin, it could add a paragraph to introduce the organization and add links for the costs and benefits for being a paid member. In addition, IACD could make the payment easier and more convenient. Maybe the application can be localized or IACD can open an account accepting different currency payment.



## Other Findings

### *The possibility to increase membership fee or to get donation*

When asked the question “Would you be willing to donate or see an increase in membership fees to enable IACD to continue and expand our work?, 40 respondents said “Yes,” 69 respondents said “Not sure” and 18 respondents answered “No”. The following charts can show the specific answer distribution:



Based on the result, IACD could make further contact with the respondents. It seems that the majority of the respondents are not sure. Further surveys could ask respondents how much they are willing to donate or how much more they are willing to pay for the

membership. Different ranges of money values could be provided to ask the respondents to choose. Then further actions could be taken based on the results of the survey.

### *Access to IACD information sources*

IACD also would like to see where people get their information about IACD, seven choices are listed for respondents to choose. The results are shown in the following table:

**Table 7. Sources to access IACD information**

A. IACD website ( <a href="http://www.iacdglobal.org/">http://www.iacdglobal.org/</a> )	99
B. E-bulletin	95
C. Blog ( <a href="http://www.iacdglobal.org/blog">http://www.iacdglobal.org/blog</a> )	7
D. Practice Insights publication	27
E. Facebook page (International Association for Community Development)	37
F. LinkedIn (International Association for Community Development)	19
G. Twitter (IACD_global)	8

99 respondents have access to IACD website and 95 have access to E-bulletin. This is strange because everyone should have access to E-bulletin. It is because they signed up with their email addresses to receive the E-bulletins. Maybe they don't read them when they receive the E-bulletin and they regard this as no access to it. Then the survey asks which information sources they find most useful. 45 respondents think IACD website is the most useful because it provides a lot of information. 40 respondents think E-bulletin is the

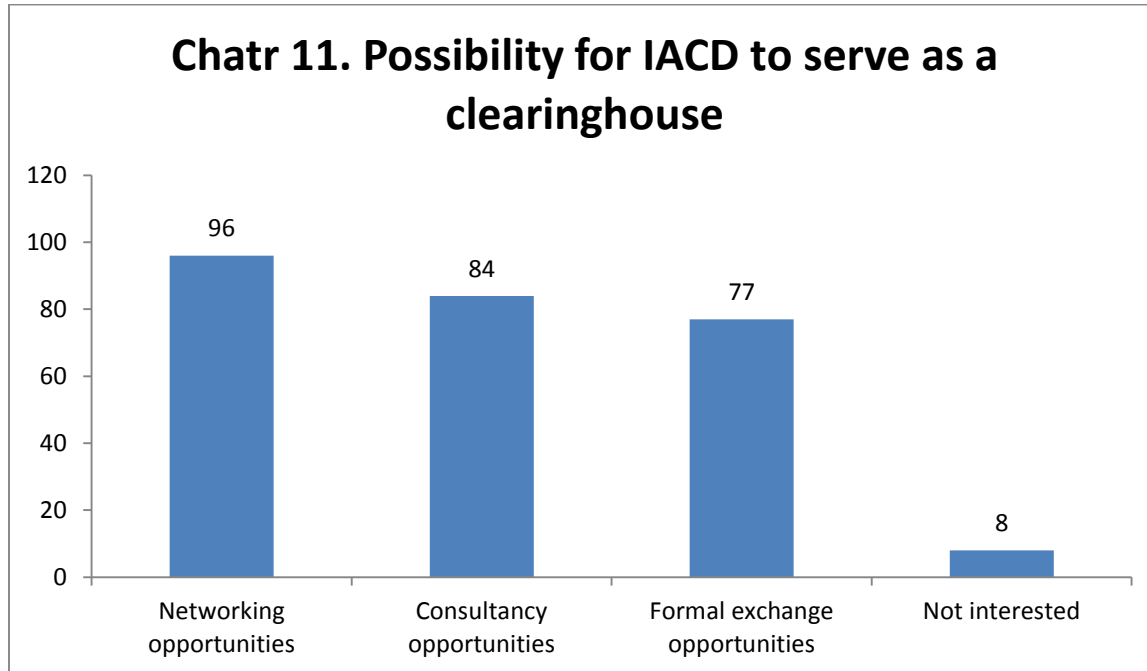
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most useful because it is informative and snappy. 10 respondents think Facebook is the most useful because nowadays FB is more and more popular. Practice Insights publication is regarded the most useful by 9 respondents and 1 respondent thinks Blog is the most useful and another 1 chooses LinkedIn as the most useful. Regarding the website, 4 respondents think improvement is necessary for the website. Among these 4 respondents, 1 suggests regular information update, including research publications. Another one recommends IACD website to conduct webinars or share videos of members telling good news/stories. Also the same respondent suggests IACD to conduct online training, not necessarily accredited, to members about community development.

### *Possibility to serve as a clearinghouse*

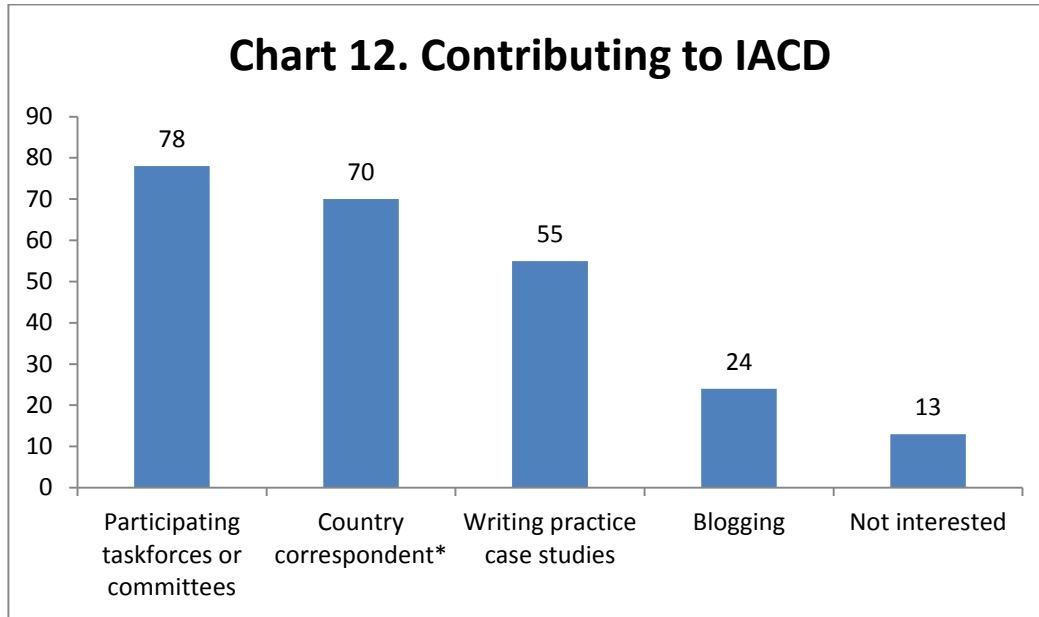
The survey also asks whether respondents would like to submit their resume/CV to an IACD clearinghouse. The following chart shows the results of the possibilities for acting as a clearinghouse of IACD.



Based on the results, it can be seen that people are actually interested in submitting resume/CV to IACD if it can serve as a clearinghouse. 96 respondents expressed interest in submitting their resume/CV for networking opportunities; 84 for consultancy opportunities and 77 for formal exchange opportunities with universities or NGOs.

#### *Volunteering for IACD*

Except to increase number of paid members, another purpose of IACD to conduct this survey is to see whether people would like to contribute to IACD other than financially. In this respect, IACD asks survey respondents to choose what they would like to contribute to IACD among 4 roles. The results are shown in the following chart:



\*country correspondent: sharing information on community development activities in your country, building membership etc.

Chart 12 shows that “Participating taskforces or committees” (78 out of 127), “Country correspondent” (70 out of 127) and “Writing practice case studies” (55 out of 127) are the top three choices. Country respondent can share information on CD activities in the home country so that more people would know about IACD, hence more members. Also more people would pay attention to CD. Writing practice case studies could fulfill the need of some members to hear more stories and for CD people to learn. In the survey, if respondents are interested in shouldering any of the above roles, they are asked to leave their email addresses. Further contact could be made with them to decide what they can do based on the needs of IACD.

Meantime, respondents are asked if their country has a national community development agency/organization, their answers could be found in Appendix 3. Perhaps

IACD could use the information to build partnership to hold more and better events for its members and relevant parties in different regions.

### *Evolution of CD field in the next decade*

Respondents are also asked about their views on how the field of community development will evolve in the next ten years. In total 105 people gave answers to this question. Their answers are summarized as follows:

**Table 8. How do you see the field of community development evolving in the next ten years?**

CD will play a bigger role in economic development, cultural preservation, etc.	18
Asset-based CD will be the focus (emphasis on local asset – human capital, local resources)	15
There will be more sharing and networking in CD sector	15
Positive attitude (it will be better, improve etc.)	17
Negative attitude (it will develop slowly, challenging)	9
CD will be more politically institutionalized (government will use it as a tool for development)	5

The answers regarding to the evolvement of community development in the next decade are categorized into six types: 18 people think that CD will play a bigger role in local economic development and cultural preservation, etc. 15 people say that asset-based CD needs to be the focus in the next decade, which means that community development should

be led locally and local asset should play the most important role; Another 15 people state that in the next decade more people will know about community development; 17 respondents just simply express positive opinion about CD in the next decade with answers such as CD will improve and it will become better; 9 people express negative attitude with answers like it will develop slowly; 5 respondents say it will become more common for government to use CD as a tool for development.

### **Recommendations**

Based on the survey results, the following recommendations are proposed for IACD to work on:

#### *For paid members*

- Offering online videos to train members about CD; Actually on the website of IACD, the section of CD Tools is dedicated to share information and practices of CD in text. However, maybe more promotion needs to be done to enable members to make use of knowledge sharing and case studies that already exist on the website;
- Member contact information could be shared locally so that members from the same country or region could network more and more local and regional conferences, maybe webinars, could be held under the lead of country correspond;
- If resources are available, international tours could be offered to members who would like to pay to visit places with successful community development practice.

#### *For previous members who did not renew their membership*

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- IACD could send out renewal reminder messages twice instead of once to increase the chance of expiring members to see the reminder and renew their membership;
- In addition, from time to time, messages should be sent out to remind people to update their email address to IACD when they switch to a new email address so that they could receive the reminder to renew their membership;
- When reminder message is sent out, spam language or words should be avoided so that the email does not go to the spam folder.

### *For non-paying members*

- It seems a lot of the E-bulletin subscribers do not know IACD well. Every month, when IACD sends out the E-bulletin, it could add a paragraph to introduce IACD and add links for the costs and benefits for being a paid member to invite people to become a member;
- In addition, IACD could make the payment easier and more convenient. Maybe the application can be localized or IACD can open an account accepting different currency payment so that potential members can pay the membership fee more easily.

### *To increase the membership fee or receive donation*

Although 40 respondents say they are willing to see a membership fee increase or to donate, the results of this survey cannot provide enough information for IACD to increase the membership fee because the majority of the respondents are not sure about whether



they are willing to see a membership fee increase or to donate. Based on this situation, the following actions could be taken:

- For the respondents of this survey, further survey could be conducted to ask how much they are willing to donate or how much more they are willing to pay. Different ranges of money values could be provided to ask the respondents to choose. Then actions could be taken based on the results of the following survey.

### *Volunteering for IACD and submitting resume/CV to IACD*

- If IACD needs more volunteers, then it could contact the respondents who have expressed willingness to volunteer and assign tasks based on the needs of IACD and their choices;
- IACD could ask for resume/CV from respondents to increase consultancy opportunities and networking opportunities for them.

### **Limitations of this survey**

#### *Self-selection bias*

The intent of this survey was to reach every E-bulletin subscribers, however, some of the people who received the email chose to complete the survey, most of the people who received the survey did not respond. For the respondents, the reasons why they chose to complete the survey may be that they are highly interested in IACD or community development; therefore they self-chose themselves to be a respondent. Maybe they have some fundamental differences than the people who choose not to become a respondent.

### *Nonresponse error*

If fundamental differences exist between respondents and non-respondents, then self-selection could lead to nonresponse error. For this survey, 253 people opened the link, but 126 did not finish it. I only analyzed the results based on the people who completed the survey. Maybe there are significant differences between people who opened the survey but did not finish it and those who completed it. However, even with the existence of the nonresponse error, the results from this survey are still useful, at least for the people who have completed the survey.

This is the first time that the author did this kind of survey. In order to increase the response rate for future surveys, IACD could send out pre-survey notification to ask whether people are willing to help do a survey. Also, more incentives could be offered if resources permit. In addition, two reminders to complete the survey could be sent out after the survey so that the response rate might be higher.

## **Conclusion**

The issue of free riding of monthly E-bulletin offered by IACD for free does exist among non-paying members and previous members who did not renew their membership status. IACD expressed clearly it won't charge fees for E-bulletin. Therefore, it could only take measures to improve services and benefits to attract more members. The survey results show that some measures could be taken, including providing online training, international tour and more networking opportunities for paid members. For members whose membership is going to expire, IACD could send out reminder message twice to

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remind them to renew their membership. In addition, more convenient membership fee payment method can also increase the number of paid members. There is also a possibility that IACD could get some donation from E-bulletin members and increase the membership fee. However, this needs to be confirmed by further surveys. Besides financial gains, IACD could also contact people who have expressed interest to volunteer for IACD based on its needs.

The results from this survey can only apply to the respondents who have completed the survey, because they are not randomly selected from all of the E-bulletin subscribers and they cannot represent the opinions of the people who did not complete the survey, hence selection bias and nonresponse error might exist.

## Appendix 1

### IACD stakeholder Survey

We would be grateful if you could take a few minutes to respond to our survey. We hope the results will help improve our services for our members and other stakeholders. Once completed, you can opt to be entered into a prize draw to win IACD membership for one year! Thank you, the IACD team.

Name:

Country:\*

1. How would you describe your main area(s) or work?\*
  - A. Community activism
  - B. Community leadership
  - C. Community development practice
  - D. Evaluation
  - E. Project/program management
  - F. Advocacy/policy
  - G. Education/training
  - H. Fundraising/finance
  - I. other
2. What sectors are you working in?\*
  - A. Agriculture
  - B. Arts and culture
  - C. Economic development
  - D. Education
  - E. Environment
  - F. Health
  - G. Housing
  - H. Information and Communications Technology
  - I. Public infrastructure
  - J. Water & Sanitation
  - K. Rural
  - L. Urban
  - M. Women
  - N. Youth
  - O. Other
3. If applicable, what type of organization do you work for?
  - A. Community-based organization
  - B. Local NGO
  - C. National NGP
  - D. International NGO

- E. Social enterprise
  - F. Academic
  - G. Business
  - H. Donor/funder
  - I. Local government
  - J. Regional government
  - K. National government
  - L. other
4. Are you a current member of IACD?\*
- A. Yes (organizational member)
  - B. Yes (individual member)
  - C. No, I never have been
  - D. No, I was but have not renewed

## **For paid members**

5. Of the following services and benefits, which do you find most useful?\*
- Discounted rates at IACD international conferences
  - Discounted subscriptions to the international Community Development Journal
  - Besides monthly ebulletin, special email updates about issues of particular interest to IACD members
  - Opportunities to learn about community development practice around the world through our website and publications such as Practice Insights
  - Opportunities to share your work and experiences with a global audience, through our website, ebulletins and other publications
  - Access to restricted areas of the IACD website, with opportunities for learning and practice exchange
  - Opportunities to connect with others and to shape the direction of IACD by joining one of our task forces or working groups
  - Other \_\_\_\_\_
6. Are there any other reasons why you are a member?
7. If resources were available, what additional benefits would you like IACD to provide to paid members?

## **For non-paying members**

8. Please indicate below why you are not a member of IACD\*
- Membership fee is too high
  - Membership benefits are not attractive enough
  - I can get free monthly E-bulletin even if I am not a member
  - Other organizations provide better services
  - None of the above

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9. Please explain your choice or give other reasons
10. What would encourage you to become a member

### **For previous members who did not renew membership**

11. Please indicate why you did not renew your membership\*
  - Forgot to renew and/or did not notice the renewal reminder message
  - Not good value for money
  - Free access to ebulletin and other information even if I am not a paid member
  - Change of job – I no longer work in the field of community development
  - Better services from other similar organizations
  - None of the above
12. Please explain your choice or give other reasons
13. What would encourage you to renew your membership?

### **For all participants**

14. Would you be willing to donate or see an increase in membership fees to enable IACD to continue and expand our work?\*
  - A. Yes
  - B. Not sure
  - C. No
15. Which of these do you access?\*
  - A. IACD website (<http://www.iacdglobal.org/>)
  - B. E-bulletin
  - C. Blog (<http://www.iacdglobal.org/blog>)
  - D. Practice Insights publication
  - E. Facebook page (International Association for Community Development)
  - F. LinkedIn (International Association for Community Development)
  - G. Twitter (IACD\_global)
  - H. Other\_\_\_\_
16. Of the above information sources in question 15, which do you find the most useful and why? How would you recommend IACD improve the information and services we provide?\*
17. Would you be interested in submitting your CV/resume to an IACD clearinghouse?\*
  - A. Consultancy opportunities (organizations seeking consultants with expertise and experience in community development)
  - B. Networking opportunities
  - C. Formal exchanges (e.g. with universities or NGOs)
  - D. No, I am not interested
  - E. Other\_\_\_\_
18. Would you consider contributing time to IACD in any of these ways? \*

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- A. Fulfilling the role of an IACD “country correspondent” (e.g. sharing information on community development activities in your country, building membership etc.)
  - B. Blogging
  - C. Writing practice case studies
  - D. Participating taskforces or committees
  - E. No, I am not interested
19. If you selected a role in question 12, please provide your e-mail address
20. Does your country have a national community development agency/organization? If so, please share its name and contact information
21. How do you see the field of community development evolving in the next ten years?

Thank you very much for completing this survey. If you would like to enter into a prize draw for a free IACD individual membership for one year for you or a friend (if you are already a member!), please share your e-mail address. \_\_\_\_\_

**Appendix 2 – Additional reasons given by 38 non-paying members for not joining**

**IACD**

Membership fee is too high, None of the above	I haven't decided to become a member; will maybe decide after the conference in June. I don't have any other specific reasons.	Potential member
None of the above	I don't know what benefits it will bring	Potential member
None of the above	Yet to register.	Very likely
None of the above	I mean to be a member, but just haven't done it yet.	Very likely
None of the above	I intend to join soon	Very likely
None of the above	Just haven't had time to consider membership or what it would yield.	Potential member
None of the above	Not Applicable.	
None of the above	Haven't really looked into the costs or benefits	Potential member
None of the above	I am a PhD Student - and must allocate my funds wisely. So, I am not a member.	Limited financial means
None of the above	We are more in Community ECONOMIC Development. Even if the IACD work is useful for us, we concentrate our international networking in social and solidarity economy.  A second reason is our limited capacity in human resources and financial means.	Limited financial means
None of the above	I am a member of my local professional association, and at this stage that is enough fees to pay out. I don't know what the fees are though for IACD.	Potential member
None of the above	Not allocated time to complete the application	Very likely
None of the above	To be honest, I just haven't	Potential member



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above	considered it yet.	
None of the above	Converting local currency into \$ is a challenge	Potential member
None of the above	I have on more than one occasion asked how one becomes a member and I am grateful that I have always been given appropriate feedback. I am a Kenyan, and the only thing that keeps on holding me is the mode of payment, doing it online is a little scary for me (hackers) and that is the reason why I am not member.	Very likely
None of the above	I have never known that people from the developing countries are expected to pay for being a member.	Limited financial means
None of the above	Maybe I should join. In the past I have been a member of other CD organisations, that are now either not so relevant to my work (eg Churches Community Work Alliance) or have closed down (Association of Community Workers, Community Development Exchange).	Potential member
None of the above	Haven't got around to joining!	Very likely
None of the above	As a retired community activist it is difficult to relate to, and keep in touch, with broad organisations.	
None of the above	I am not informed about IACD before, that's why I am not member still now.	Potential member
None of the above	I have not heard of this before now. This is my first attempt to know this.	Potential member
None of the above	I just haven't taken the time to do it.	Very likely
None of the above	Never considered membership before, but now feel it would benefit my research and networking, as well as add to my knowledge base.	Potential member

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None of the above	I have just been slack on this one.	Potential member
None of the above	I have not register as a Member because of some difficulties involves in online money transfer in Nigeria especially for those of us living in rural areas where financial institutions are scarce.	Potential member
None of the above	I had problems paying membership fee online.If there was a possibility to pay via Money Gram, I will pay instantly	Potential member
None of the above	I know very little about IACD	Potential member
None of the above	I assure you that I will register with you not so long.	Very likely
None of the above	To receive the bulletins is enough. If I wanted more then I would approach IACD for options	Free riding
None of the above	We are acdtive in other global networks, notably RIPESS, (the Intercontinental Network for the Promotion of the Social Solidarity Economy) and have to prioritize, we can't do them all.	
None of the above	May subscribe in future, I'm new - currently exploring career in development/project managment	Potential member
None of the above	I am currently in the process of making a Western Union Money transfer to become a member.	Potential member
None of the above	I have been wanting to join IACD. I really want to be a member. However the poor internet connectivity in the community where I live, and payment of membership view have been a militating factors.	Potential member
None of the above	Safwco's aim is to become self sustaining resourceful, disciplined and specialized training and support institution accessible to under privileged with a view to build capacities of community organizations as model	

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	development institution.	
None of the above	Collaborer pour un partner dans le souci de bien mener notre combat actuel, la lutte contre la pauvreté, la vulnérabilité sociale, et l'exclusion sociale et financière à travers la promotion de la culture de l'épargne et le développement de l'organisation de base communautaire et de groupe aider mutuelle aide.	Limited financial means
None of the above	I registered as a member but was not given any number, so am not sure about my status.	Potential member
None of the above		

**Appendix 3 – National CD organization/agency in different countries**

Country	Does your country have a national community development agency/organization? If so, please share its name and contact information
United States	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• National Organization of Development Organizations: <a href="http://www.nado.org/">http://www.nado.org/</a></li> <li>• the Community Development Society: <a href="http://www.comm_dev.org">www.comm_dev.org</a></li> <li>• the National Association of Community Development Extension Professionals (NACDEP) - <a href="http://nacdep.net/">http://nacdep.net/</a></li> <li>• World Vision US Programs</li> <li>• USAID</li> <li>• the Millenium Challenge Corporation</li> </ul>
Nepal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• We in Rural Women's Network Nepal (RUWON Nepal) <a href="http://www.ruwonnepal.org.np">www.ruwonnepal.org.np</a>, <a href="mailto:info@ruwonnepal.org.np">info@ruwonnepal.org.np</a> are trying to do from our side.</li> </ul>
England	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• CDX</li> <li>• Community Development Foundation</li> <li>• Standing Committee for Community Development</li> </ul>
Australia	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Our Community - <a href="https://www.ourcommunity.com.au">https://www.ourcommunity.com.au</a></li> <li>• the Queensland Coalition of Community Boards: Ann Ingamells <a href="mailto:a.ingamells@griffith.edu.au">a.ingamells@griffith.edu.au</a></li> <li>• Community Development Network - contact person: Maggi <a href="mailto:Shambrook.director@sandbag.org.au">Shambrook.director@sandbag.org.au</a></li> <li>• the Community Development Network of Western Australia</li> <li>• The Institute of Community Development <a href="http://community.borderlands.org.au/">http://community.borderlands.org.au/</a></li> </ul>
Kenya, Australia	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• International Association for Public Particiaption (IA2P) -- Australasia</li> </ul>
Nigeria	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• National Community Development Council of Nigeria</li> <li>• Federal Ministry of Health Dept of Community Development, Federal Secretariat Complex, Abuja, Nigeria. EM <a href="mailto:revadams2007@yahoo.com">revadams2007@yahoo.com</a></li> <li>• Community and Rural Development Department</li> <li>• Federal Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development</li> <li>• Community Development Association of Nigeria (CDAN)</li> <li>• Department of Adult Education</li> <li>• University of Ibadan, Nigeria</li> <li>• Federal Ministry of Rural and Social Development</li> <li>• FCT Abuja</li> </ul>

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Canada	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Canadian Community Economic Development Network (CCEDNet)</li> <li>• Regroupement québécois des intervenantes et intervenants en organisation communautaire en CSSS (RQIIAC)  <a href="http://www.rqiiac.qc.ca/">http://www.rqiiac.qc.ca/</a>            Adhésion et abonnement            a/s André Gauthier            CSSS de la Vieille-Capitale            3108 Chemin Sainte-Foy            Québec            G1X 1P8            andre.gauthier@csssvc.qc.ca            418 651-2572 # 8373</li> </ul>
ghana	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Department of community development and social welfare</li> <li>• NATIONAL community development practitioners association of Ghana(NACODP)</li> <li>• Community Development Association of Ghana(COMDEVAG)            BOX M266            ACCRA</li> <li>• Community Development Association of Ghana</li> </ul>
South Africa	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The National Department of Social Development</li> <li>• Community Development Professionalisation Steering Committee, <a href="http://www.cdpsc.co.za/">http://www.cdpsc.co.za/</a></li> </ul>
United Kingdom	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the Community Development Foundation, <a href="http://www.cdf.org.uk">www.cdf.org.uk</a>.</li> <li>• the National Community Activists' network (NATCAN)</li> <li>• The British Association of Social Workers (BASW)</li> <li>• Federation for Community Development Learning (FCDL)</li> </ul>
Scotland	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Scottish Community Development Centre            Telephone: +44 (0)1337 858 808</li> <li>• The Scottish Community Development Network (SCDN)  <a href="http://www.scdn.org.uk/contact-us/4582727927">http://www.scdn.org.uk/contact-us/4582727927</a></li> <li>• Community Development Alliance Scotland            56 Turnberry Road            GLASGOW G11 5AP            Telephone: 0141 586 7588            Mobile: 07946 534 844            E-mail: <a href="mailto:cdas@pdtaylor.com">cdas@pdtaylor.com</a></li> </ul>
Philippines	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Community Development Society of the Philippines</li> </ul>
New Zealand	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Inspiring Communities</li> </ul>
Democratic Republic of Congo	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ASODE</li> </ul>

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Pakistan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Pakistan Planning Commission</li><li>• Islamabad Pakistan</li></ul>
Northern Ireland	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Community Development and Health Network</li><li>• Community Change</li><li>• Rural Community Network</li></ul>
Italie	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• ACAF Italia</li></ul>
Papua New Guinea	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Coffey</li><li>• City Mission</li><li>• Coalition for Change: empowering women; addressing gender based violence</li><li>• church groups like Four Square also develop community based programs</li></ul>