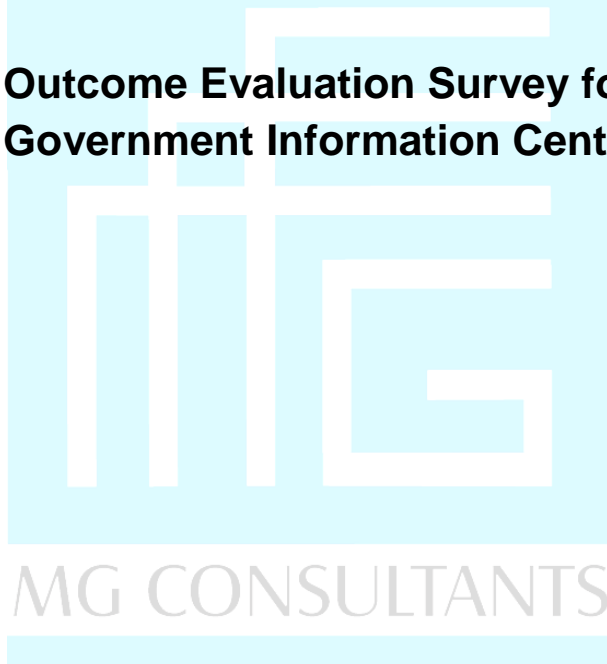


E-SRI LANKA DEVELOPMENT PROJECT

Outcome Evaluation Survey for Government Information Centre



FINAL REPORT

2011



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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Government Information Centre (GIC) was established as Sri Lanka's first one-stop Government call centre under the Re-engineering Government Programme in August, 2006 to enable citizens to obtain Government information and services in an efficient, effective and friendly manner. The GIC was launched as a public / private sector partnership and it is a single, electronic, trilingual, online knowledgebase of over 1,500 services available from more than 120 key Government organizations.

The Information and Communication Technology Agency (ICTA) continues its efforts to monitor the GIC project with the aim of improving the quality of services provided to the citizens, while expanding the present coverage of Government Organizations. This outcome evaluation survey is an endeavour in this regard, which is designed for measuring the outcome of GIC services and identifying areas that need to be further improved.

A combination of quantitative and qualitative research methods have been identified and applied during the outcome evaluation study. Information were collected to analyze the demand, supply, as well as operational and management aspects of GIC. The research methodology comprised of a comprehensive literature study, sampling, development of study instruments, collection and analysis of field data and interpretation of results in a detailed report.

GIC is handling over 35,000 calls per week successfully, while human resource constraints in terms of adequacy and capacity exist in the centre itself as well as in Government Organizations. The need for improving the facilities and the technology to handle the high call volume has also been identified.

29% of the general public are aware of GIC. The majority (56%) of the users have come to know about GIC through the television media. Satisfaction of the general public on GIC services is found to be at a high level, which shows an increasing reliance on the information provided by the centre. More than 85% of the users are satisfied with the services provided by both, the call centre and the website. Significantly, 99% of the GIC users are willing to obtain GIC services again and are happy to recommend GIC to others. In general the high and rising levels of satisfaction with GIC indicates citizens' eagerness to interact with Government through GIC.

Among the Government Organizations, the Department of Railways and the Department of Motor Traffic are having comparatively high information demand through GIC. The users are happy to interact with GIC, but are having difficulties in finding the information they need in relation to some of the Government Organizations. Therefore, the officials in Government Organizations need to step up their efforts to improve the respective information bases in GIC. The Government organizations should also develop, plan and manage the information infrastructure, information resources and information systems within the organization to provide an efficient and effective services through GIC. On the other hand, awareness and knowledge of the public needs to be improved via extended usage of mass media including Tamil channels. Moreover, the Government should continue to play an important role as a facilitator, a coordinator and a strategist for diffusion of public information through GIC via adopting appropriate public policy.

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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 e-Sri Lanka Development Project and Re-engineering Government Programme

The Government of Sri Lanka (GoSL) launched 'e-Sri Lanka', a national development initiative in November 2002, with the aim of enhancing growth and equity through: (1) improved access and use of information and communication technology; (2) access to and use of public services on-line by businesses and citizens; and (3) enhanced competitiveness of the private sector and in particular of knowledge industry and SMEs. Specifically the project work supports: (1) establishing an effective, citizen-centred and business-friendly Government; (2) empowering the rural poor, disadvantaged groups, women and youth through increased and affordable access to information and communication tools developing leadership and skills in ICT; and (3) creating employment in the ICT industry and ICT enabled services, and enhancing the competitiveness of user industries and services.

The project comprises the following component Programmes:

- ICT Policy, Leadership and Institutional Development Programme
- ICT Human Resource Development and Industry Promotion Programme
- Backbone Communications Infrastructure
- Tele-Centre Development Programme
- Re-engineering Government Programme
- e-Society Programme

The Reengineering Government Programme pursues major and sustainable improvements in Government's efficiency, transparency, effectiveness, and quality of services. The Programme will reinforce and expand fundamental governance and public management reforms for many of the already identified Government organizations. This will be achieved by reengineering public sector work process through strategic use of ICT and by implementing novel ICT enabled administrative policies.

As a component of the Reengineering Government Programme, the Government Information Centre (GIC) was established as a "one-stop shop" to provide Government information and services to citizens in a convenient, comprehensive and friendly manner via the web and telephone.

1.2 Government Information Centre (GIC)

1.2.1 Origin of GIC

Before the introduction of Re-engineering Government Programme, only a few Government services were actively supporting the citizens, businesses, public servants and Government Organizations to obtain their information and services through ICT based channels. For example, the Department of Immigration and Emigration provided information and forms, online and all Government publications were available through Intranet and/or Internet. However, obtaining a particular Government service in general, used to involve navigating through a thicket of

organizations and making multiple personal visits and repeated telephone calls. Language was a further barrier for the 25% of Sri Lankan citizens who speak Tamil. Obtaining the correct and relevant information which is related to the citizen services provided by various Government organizations was a difficult and unpleasant task due to above mentioned reasons. In order to address these issues, the Government Information Centre (GIC) was established as the Sri Lanka's first one-stop Government call centre under the Re-engineering Government Programme in August, 2006 to enable the citizens to obtain Government information and services in an efficient, effective and friendly manner.

GIC was launched as a public / private sector partnership and it is the single, electronic, trilingual (Sinhala, Tamil and English), online knowledgebase of over 1,500 services available to citizens from 134¹ key Government Organizations. The services are categorized under following sub topics.²

- Agriculture, Livestock & Fisheries
- Banking, Tax & Insurance
- Citizen's Registrations
- Communication & Media
- Education & Training
- Employment Information
- Environment
- Health, Well Being & Social Service
- Housing, Property & Utilities
- Justice, Law & Rights
- Trade, Business & Industry
- Travel, Tourism & Leisure

The related procedures that need to be followed up for using these services are also included in the database.

1.2.2 Objectives and Beneficiaries of GIC

The objectives of GIC³ are:

- a) **Phase 1: provide information** on services of the Government to the citizens in a manner that is convenient. In order to do this, the following two channels have been used:
 - i. *Setting up of "Government Information Centre" and*
 - ii. *Construction of web enabled database on citizen services.*

- b) **Phase 2: provide services** to citizens so that they can interact with Government easily (Increase the functionality of GIC so that it not only provides answers to questions raised by citizens, but also provides other services).

¹ Government Information Centre - Annual Report ,2009

² http://www.gic.gov.lk/gic/index.php?option=com_org&Itemid=4&lang=en

³ Project Plan for GIC

The key beneficiaries⁴ of the project are of two types.

- a) Public (primary beneficiary as the receiver of the Government information and web enabled services)
- b) Public Sector Organizations
 - Provides a key input, in the form of information about services offered by the organization. The quality and the freshness of information provided by the Departments will determine the usefulness of GIC.
 - As they will eventually 'outsource' all functions relating to query handling currently done at individual organizations to GIC.
 - Will also increase the efficiency, as there will be fewer rejected applications (As citizens are more conscious of requirements when applying for a service)

The expected outcome⁵ on the above mentioned beneficiaries are;

- Citizens receive accurate information via website and Call Centre
- Citizens enjoy a positive experience interacting with Call Centre operators
- Citizens enjoy greater convenience in obtaining Government services
- Government employees have sufficient time to give advice and provide core services

1.2.3 Project Management Approach and Functions of GIC

The Presidential Secretariat has taken over the ownership of the Call Centre project (GIC – 1919) since April 2009; however ICTA still owns and manages the GIC website from which the general public, who have access to internet, can obtain information via the GIC Web Portal (www.gic.gov.lk). A Project Steering Committee headed by the Additional Secretary to the President makes all policy decisions related to the GIC call centre as well as the website.

Operational activities are carried out by the ICTA “GIC - Team”. The “GIC Team” meets regularly and discusses the ways and means to further improve the mechanism for providing information through web. The team is responsible for directing and coordinating the project, contract administration, monitoring the progress of content development, training of personnel and other logistic support.

The “GIC – Team” with the web development team, reviews the technical aspects of the website to ensure the high quality of the website in conformity with “Government Web Standards”.

- A Content Management System (Joomla - CMS) is used to manage and organize the information
- Provide training to the GIC coordinators on updating content
- Information is updated by the GIC coordinators of the respective organizations regularly
- Status of content updating process is maintained in a Google document

⁴ Project Plan for GIC

⁵ GIC Logical Framework

- ICT Agency (ICTA) of Sri Lanka monitors and coordinates the content uploading, maintenance, enhancements and modifications.

There is a template for providing information in relation to the Government organizations and citizen services to the GIC - 1919.

GIC is equipped with well trained call agents to handle inquiries of the general public coming through highly advertised number - 1919. The call centre is operational from 8.00 a.m. to 8.00 p.m. throughout the year and on average it receives over 5,000 calls daily.



Call agents of the GIC

Various Departments which provide citizen services have provided information in soft form (digital) to the knowledgebase which can be easily accessed by the call agents when they are handling public inquiries coming through 1919. The same information has been uploaded in the web where citizens can directly access and obtain the information. The knowledgebase and the web are being updated by the respective Government bodies on a regular basis. The representatives who have been appointed by the respective Government Organizations are responsible for organizing and updating the information. The call agents contact these appointed Government representatives when they need assistance regarding information on public services.

If a caller requires some information, which is not readily available at the centre, the call agent will obtain the postal address/contact number/email of the caller and the required information will be forwarded subsequently after obtaining clarifications from the relevant Government organization.

The knowledgebase, stored in an Structured Query Language (SQL) database, is available through multiple channels, including a Microsoft Visual Basic interface for call centre staff, a web based interface for the IT-literate general public, and to accommodate future expansion, a web services Application Programming Interface (API).

The GIC has already won two international awards including World Summit Awards for e-Content and Creativity in 2009⁶. The ICTA continues its efforts to monitor the GIC project with the aim of improving the services provided to the citizens, while expanding the present coverage of Government Organizations. This outcome evaluation survey is an attempt in this regard, which is designed for measuring performance, evaluating progress towards outcomes, improving focus and measuring impact of the project under the monitoring and evaluation framework of the e-SLDP.

⁶ <http://www.wsis-award.org/winners/e-Government-and-institutions>

2. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

2.1 Main Objective

The broad objective of this assignment is to carry out a detailed outcome evaluation of the GIC project. The evaluation study focuses on measuring the quality of the service provided by GIC and identifying areas that need to be further improved.

2.2 Specific Objectives

The specific objectives of the study are as follows.

- Assess the level of awareness among the general public and the sources of obtaining information about Government services
- Analyse monitoring data of GIC to find out trends, variations and gaps in information supply and demand.
- Assess the sources that create awareness about GIC among users and the level of satisfaction of users in terms of quality, accuracy, adequacy and relevance of information and overall response of the call centre agents
- Assess the benefits of GIC to the general public
- Assess the impact of GIC on the performance of Government organizations
- Assess the management aspects of GIC and the call handling process in terms of sincerity, attention, interest, friendliness, professionalism of the call centre agents
- Identify the issues faced by GIC staff in terms of quality and adequacy of information and level of cooperation from the Government organizations etc.
- Assess the coordination mechanism between, ICTA, GIC and Government Organizations in terms of updating the knowledgebase (KB), responding to queries, handling complaints, etc.
- Assess the sustainability of GIC project in the long run
- Assess the possibilities of expansion of the project in the future

3. METHODOLOGY

3.1 Research Design

Based on the TOR and project documents, a combination of quantitative and qualitative research methods was identified and applied to carry out an outcome evaluation of GIC project. Information were collected to analyze the demand, supply, as well as operational and management aspects of GIC. The demand aspect was evaluated based on the information collected from the GIC users and the supply part was evaluated by collecting information from the contact personnel of the Government Organizations of which the information were available in GIC. The operational and management aspect of GIC was evaluated by collecting information from the key stakeholders of the GIC.

3.2 Literature Review

A comprehensive review of the published and unpublished literature was carried out by the Consultants in order to collect all the relevant information on the GIC project. The logical framework of the GIC project was studied and the expected results and objectively verifiable indicators were identified in consultation with the client. In addition, the documents mentioned below were also reviewed.

- GIC Project Plan
- GIC Evaluation Report of ICTA, January, 2009
- GIC Annual Report, 2009
- Other web based documents

At the end of the secondary data / literature review, the Consultants proposed an appropriate set of variables and indicators that can be used for the development data collecting instruments.

3.3 Sampling

The sample frame was developed using the existing information at GIC. The caller lists were collected form GIC, the list of Government institutes with contact details of representatives and email addresses of people who made queries via GIC web were collected form ICTA. The telephone directory published by Sri Lanka Telecom was used as the base for developing the sample of General Public.

The target population in most of the instances was too large to attempt to survey all of its members. Therefore a small, but statistically valid sample was used to represent the population.

Out of all available methods under sampling, Proportionate Stratified Random Sampling (PSRS) was chosen as the best method considering the available resources such as time, money, accessibility, size of the population and practical issues. The main objective of applying Stratified Random Sampling was to identify suitable strata that have a meaningful representation of the whole population.

Considering the GIC stakeholder population, Districts of Sri Lanka were considered as the strata which represent the whole population of the Country without any bias. The final study sample is given in Table 1 below.

Table 1: Study Sample

Respondent	Method	Sample Size
Callers	Telephone interviews	762
	Face to Face interviews	376
Web Users	Online questionnaires	67
General Public	Telephone interviews	740
GIC Coordinators	Face to Face interviews	60
Call Agents	Face to Face interviews	14
Quality Controllers and Supervisors	In-depth interviews	03
ICTA Managers	In-depth interviews	05
Heads of Government Institutes (linked with GIC)	In-depth interviews	57
Heads of Government Institutes (considered to be linked)	In-depth interviews	15

Sampling overview of the survey and the District-wise distribution of the Caller, Face to face and General Public sample are presented in Annex I.

3.4 Study Instruments

Evaluation of this nature needs multiple techniques of data collection. The Consultants developed the required data collecting instruments, applying due attention to the objectives of the study.

The respondents of the survey are of four types.

- a) ICTA personnel responsible for implementation of the GIC project
- b) Users of GIC services (callers and web users)
- c) Representatives of Government Institutions (Heads of Institutions and GIC Coordinators)
- d) GIC staff (call agents, quality controllers and supervisors)

Different data collecting instruments as indicated in Table 2 were developed to collect qualitative and quantitative data from above mentioned respondents. The detailed study instruments are given in Annex 2.

Table 2: Study Instruments

Respondent	Method	Data collecting instrument
Callers	Telephone interviews	Questionnaire I
	Face to Face interviews	Questionnaire II
Web Users	Online questionnaires	Questionnaire III
General Public	Telephone interviews	Questionnaire IV
GIC Coordinators	Face to Face interviews	Questionnaire V
Call Agents	Face to Face interviews	Questionnaire VI
Quality Controllers and Supervisors	In-depth interviews	Interview Guideline I
ICTA Managers	In-depth interviews	Interview Guideline II
Heads of Government Institutes (linked with GIC)	In-depth interviews	Interview Guideline III
Heads of Government Institutes (considered to be linked)	In-depth interviews	Interview Guideline IV

The variables and indicators used for development of the questionnaires are given in Table 3.

Table 3: Variables and Indicators

Variables	Indicators
Questionnaire I - Questionnaire for Interviewing Persons who obtained GIC Services over the Telephone (1919) (Telephone Interview)	
Sources that create awareness on GIC	% of respondents who became aware of GIC due to a particular source
Experience with call agents (attention, understanding, politeness, friendliness and voice clarity of the call agents and accuracy, relevance and timing of responses)	% of responses under the categories of good, moderate or poor % of respondents who were able to get the required information
Advantages of using GIC	% of responses under each advantage
Satisfaction on GIC	% of respondents who were satisfied with GIC
Repeated use of GIC	% of respondents who were willing to use GIC facilities again % of respondents who were willing to recommend GIC facilities to others
Questionnaire II - Questionnaire for Interviewing Persons who obtained GIC Services over the Telephone (1919) (Face to Face Interview)	
Sources that create awareness on GIC	% of respondents who became aware of GIC due to a particular source
Services in demand	% of respondents who have obtained the particular service
Organizations in demand	% of respondents who have obtained information about the particular organization
Experience with call agents (attention, understanding, politeness, friendliness and voice clarity of the call agents and accuracy, relevance and timing of responses)	% of responses under the categories of good, moderate or poor % of respondents who were able to get the required information % of queries successfully answered
Advantages of using GIC	% of responses under each advantage

Satisfaction on GIC	% of respondents who were satisfied with GIC
Use of GIC for making complaints	% of respondents who have made complaints using GIC
Repeated use of GIC	Average number of queries during last 3 months % of respondents who were willing to use GIC facilities again % of respondents who were willing to recommend GIC facilities to others
Questionnaire III - Questionnaire for Interviewing Persons who obtained GIC Services over the Web (Online Interview)	
Sources that create awareness on GIC	% of respondents who became aware of GIC due to a particular source
Places of accessing GIC website	% of respondents who have accessed GIC form the particular source
Experience on GIC website (accuracy, relevance and freshness of information and available facilities)	% of responses under the categories of excellent, good, moderate, poor or very poor
Advantages of using GIC website	% of responses under each advantage
Repeated use of GIC website	Average number of visits to the GIC website % of respondents who were willing to use GIC website again % of respondents who were willing to recommend GIC website to others
Questionnaire IV - Questionnaire for General Public (Telephone Interview)	
Sources used to obtain information on Government services	% of respondents who were using the particular source
Awareness on GIC	% of respondents who were aware of GIC % of respondents who have used the services of GIC % of respondents who have used the services of GIC during last month
Questionnaire V - Questionnaire for Persons who are working as GIC Coordinators in Government Organizations (Face to Face Interview)	
Organizational facilitation of GIC related activities	% of respondents who were given a training in relation to GIC
Existence of a web link	% of organizations that have a web link
Frequency of updating information	% of organizations that update information frequently
Reception of queries through GIC	Average number of queries per week, average response time
Staff allocation for GIC related activities	Average number of personnel assigned for GIC related activities
Advantages to the organization	% of responses under each advantage
Operational challenges	The challenges that get higher ranks
Expected improvements	% of responses under each aspect
Questionnaire VI - Questionnaire for Persons who are working as Call Agents in GIC (Face to Face Interview)	
Work experience	Average work duration as a call agent, Average work duration as a call agent in GIC

Facilitation of GIC related activities by the process consultants and ICTA	% of respondents who were given a training in relation to GIC % of responses on available facilities and working environment
Call volume	Average number of calls per call agent
Language abilities	% of call agents conversant in each language
Job satisfaction	% of respondents who were satisfied with the job % of responses under each of their expectation
Interview Guideline I - Questions / Interview Guideline for Persons who are working as Quality Controllers / Supervisors in GIC (Face to Face Interview)	
Existing working environment, facilities, technology and information in GIC	
Capacities, skills, supportiveness and attrition of call agents	
Coordination and work management procedure with senior management, ICTA, and Government Organizations	
Updating and validating information	
Service quality, efficiency and sustainability	
Interview Guideline II - Questions / Interview Guideline for ICTA Representatives (Face to Face Interview)	
Objectives, outcomes and expected outputs of GIC	
Existing working environment, facilities, technology and information in GIC	
Decision making, coordination, implementation, management, monitoring and evaluation mechanism of GIC	
Updating and validating information	
Benefits to the general public and to the Government Organizations	
Service quality, efficiency and sustainability	
Interview Guideline III - Questions / Interview Guideline for Heads of Government Institutes which are Linked with GIC (Face to Face Interview)	
Coordination and work management procedure with GIC, ICTA, and Government Organizations	
Updating and validating information	
Benefits to the general public and to the organization	
Service quality, efficiency and sustainability	
Interview Guideline IV - Questions / Interview Guideline for Heads of Government Institutes which are Not Linked with GIC (Face to Face Interview)	
Plans and availability of resources to link with GIC	
Benefits to the general public and to the organization	

3.5 Data Collection and Quality Assurance

3.5.1 Mobilization of the Field Research Team

Enumerators / Research Officers with at least undergraduate level qualification, fluent in English and either Tamil or Sinhala were selected to carry out field interviews. In-house graduates were selected to carryout telephone interviews and to make appointments. A Senior Research Officer was employed to carry-out interviews in Tamil.

All enumerators were trained using participatory approaches in order to collect consistent and reliable data. The groups were formed among enumerators and based on their experience, language proficiency, etc. and the survey respondents

were allocated to the groups e.g. senior enumerators / Field Research Officers (FROs) were employed to carry out qualitative data collection, with ICTA Managers, Heads of Departments and GIC Supervisors and Coordinators. These groups were given separate trainings apart from the basic training session to handle their group of respondents effectively and efficiently.

All aspects of the evaluation and questionnaire administration were explained thoroughly and the FROs were trained on how to handle the interviews. Moreover, the enumerators were instructed on how to interpret the answers of the respondents and enter in the questionnaires. All documentation related to implementation including evaluation and implementation guidelines and survey questionnaires were provided to enumerators at the training sessions.

3.5.2 Field Data Collection and Quality Assurance

Awareness creation was done among the respondents by making introductory calls. Standard scripts were used at introductory calls in order to ensure delivery of correct message, identification of the ideal contact person and making appointments. The following data collection approaches were adopted until the appropriate sample is achieved.

General Public (Awareness)

Telephone interviews

Feedback of the General Public was collected by administering a questionnaire over the phone after explaining the purpose of the survey to the respondents.

From Users (Demand)

Telephone interviews

Feedback of the persons who have made queries through telephone to the GIC was collected by administering a questionnaire over the phone after explaining of the purpose of the survey to the respondents.

Face to face interviews

Face to face interviews were carried out with another sample of persons who have made queries through telephone to GIC by taking prior appointments.

Through GIC Web

An online questionnaire was placed in the GIC website to collect the feedback of the GIC website users. A link to the questionnaire was also e-mailed to the web users who have made complaints and given feedbacks to GIC through ICTA.

Government Organization (Supply)

Face to face interviews, including in-depth interviews

Face to face interviews with the selected personnel (Heads, and the GIC Coordinators) in relevant Government Organizations were carried out after making prior appointments. Following the confirmation of the appointment, the relevant enumerator visited the organization and conducted face to face interviews with the respondents.

GIC Staff and ICTA (Operational and Policy)

In-depth interviews

In-depth interviews with the selected ICTA Officers, GIC Supervisor and Coordinators were carried out after making appointments. Face to face interviews were also carried out with the GIC Caller Agents at the GIC.

Observations and check lists

The direct observations were made by the senior enumerators and the Consultants themselves at GIC to gather the required information.

3.5.3 Survey Quality Assurance

Following approaches were used as the means of assuring quality of the survey process.

- Survey operational room; In MGC office a fully equipped survey operational room was established with all communication facilities for the survey.
- Survey Management Database: A survey management database which consisted of a list of respondents, organizations were maintained at the Office and it was continuously updated by the survey coordinator.
- Weekly summary reports were obtained from the enumerators, group leaders and reports were produced and circulated.
- Field Monitoring Reports: Two field monitoring reports, which included details on survey implementation, monitoring and quality assurance activities etc. were prepared and submitted to ICTA upon 50% and 100% completion level of the field data collection
- Regular meetings with field staff / weekly review meetings: Regular meetings were held with field staff to discuss the problems encountered during the data collection process and to update the progress. Field level problems were discussed and resolved at these meetings in consultation with ICTA.
- Data cleaning / questionnaire quality checking: All completed questionnaires were checked for completeness by the team leader. All questionnaires were given serial numbers to ensure proper identification. Missing data and incompatible data were corrected as and when necessary by referring to the respective enumerators. Data were cleaned and coded to ensure accuracy and efficiency in data entry process.
- Random live checks of telephone interviews and field interviews: Live checks of about 5% of the sample were conducted by the Consultants / Survey Manager to ensure high quality of interview process and to assess the feedback of survey respondents

3.5.4 Limitations of the Survey

- Due to practical difficulties, face to face interviews were not conducted in the Northern Province.
- Telephone Interviews were carried out by making use of the Telephone Directory. It was difficult to reach the General Public in some of the districts in Northern Province due to unavailability of Telephone numbers.
- It was not possible to meet the intended no. of respondents in Colombo District because the majority in the lists were living in other districts, although the queries have been made while they were in Colombo.
- The responses for the online questionnaire were not encouraging and therefore it was not possible to collect data from a considerable sample given the time limits.

3.6 Data Entry, Analysis and Reporting

Data Entry Modules were prepared using “Microsoft Access” with the appropriate validation techniques. The data were entered by the in-house data entry operators and the entry process was closely monitored and the databases were randomly checked by the survey coordinator to compare the entered data with the filled questionnaires.

Quantitative and qualitative data analysis and data triangulation were carried out in order to arrive into valid conclusions. Quantitative data analysis was carried out using SPSS software. Qualitative data analysing techniques were used to analyse the information collected through the in-depth interviews. The responses were grouped and summarised to facilitate the analysis process.

The final report was prepared in close collaboration with ICTA, giving attention to the objectives of the outcome evaluation survey.

4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

4.1 Public Awareness on GIC

Awareness of the general public and usage of GIC and its services were assessed through a telephone survey by making use of Sri Lanka Telecom (SLT) telephone directories.

The study revealed that the general public still depends on mass media for Government information. In general, people use the 3 most common mass media; Television, News Papers and Radio to obtain information on Government services (Figure 1).

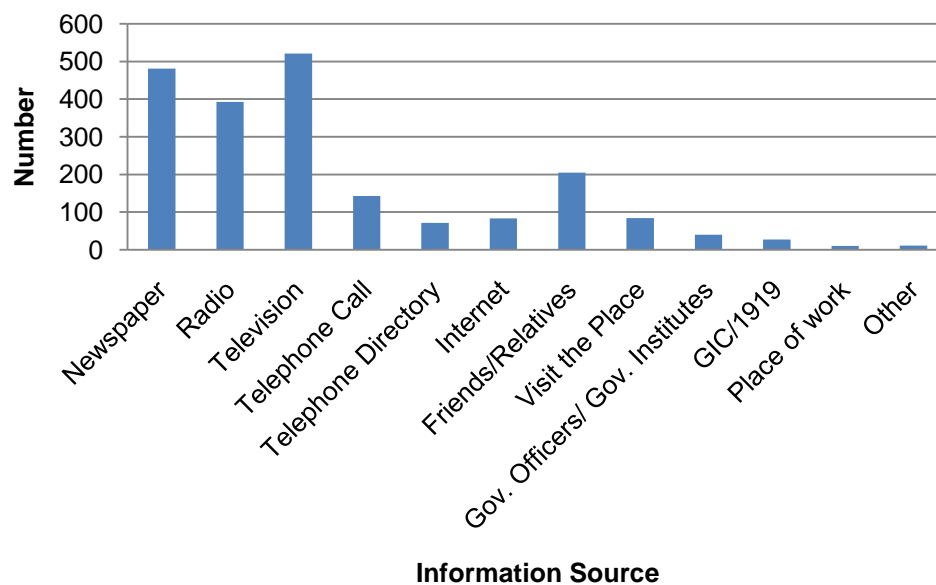


Figure 1: Information Sources on Government Services

The awareness on GIC as a source for obtaining information on Government services were comparatively low and only 3.5% of the sample identified GIC as a main source for obtaining information on Government services.

As shown in Figure 2, only 29% of the selected respondents were aware of GIC and its services. Out of those, only 30% have used GIC to get information on Government services.

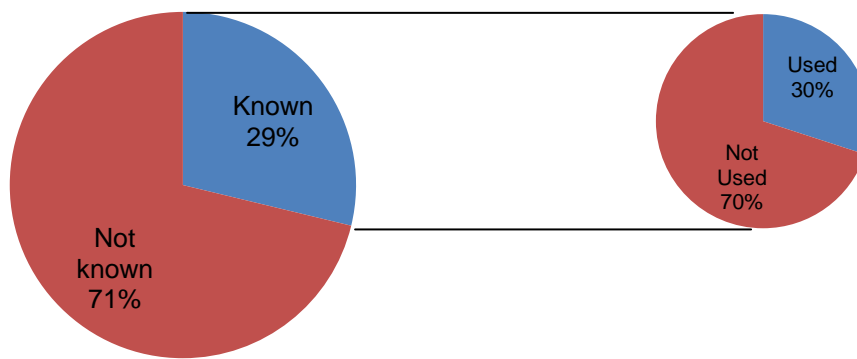


Figure 2: Awareness and Usage of GIC (1919) and its Services

As a whole, less than 9% of the selected samples have used GIC to get Government information and only 15% of them, which is less than 1.5% of the total sample, have used GIC during the last 3 months.

According to ICTA managers, public awareness in the North and East was very marginal and most of the people in those areas were not aware of the advertisements in Sinhala channels in radio or television, as almost all of them deal with the Tamil media.

4.2 Trends, Variations and Gaps in Information Supply and Demand

The introduction of GIC in 2006 by ICTA was in response to the need to create a friendly and citizen-centric interface between the Government and the public. GIC provides the citizens of Sri Lanka with the information they require for interactions with the Government Organizations. With the launch of GIC, the process of obtaining information regarding the Government services has become very simple and hassle free. The negative perceptions that the citizens had on the responsiveness of the Government organizations have also been negated by this successful venture.

GIC operates 7 days a week, 365 days a year for 12 hours each day from 8.00 a.m. to 8.00 p.m. and provides information in all three languages Sinhala, Tamil and English in a very efficient and courteous manner through multiple channels. The services obtained by dialling 1919 makes it easier for people and organizations to obtain information relating to Government organizations and State Banks.

GIC has reached the Sri Lankan citizens with the awareness made by ICTA through mass media. Over the years, the number of calls and web hits per day has increased significantly and the content of the GIC knowledgebase has been enhanced. The Figure 3 shows the increase in the number of callers during the period from 2008 to 2010.

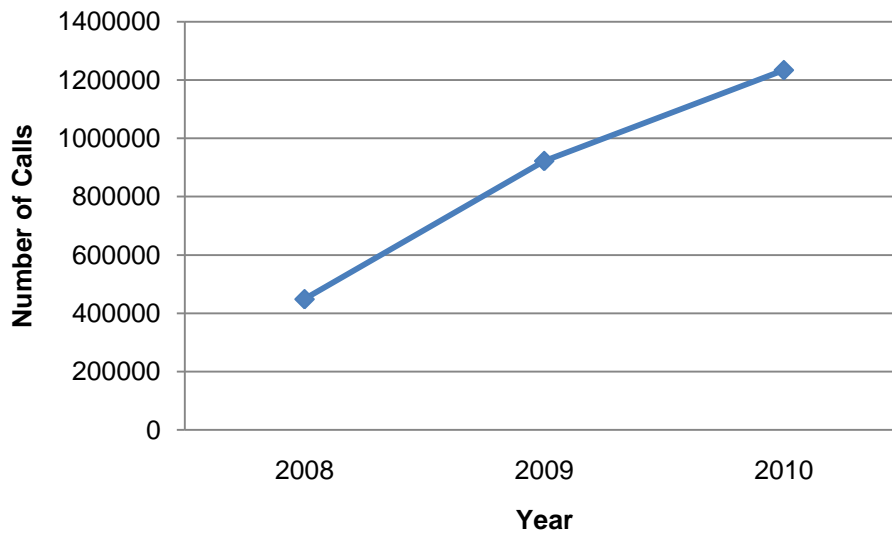
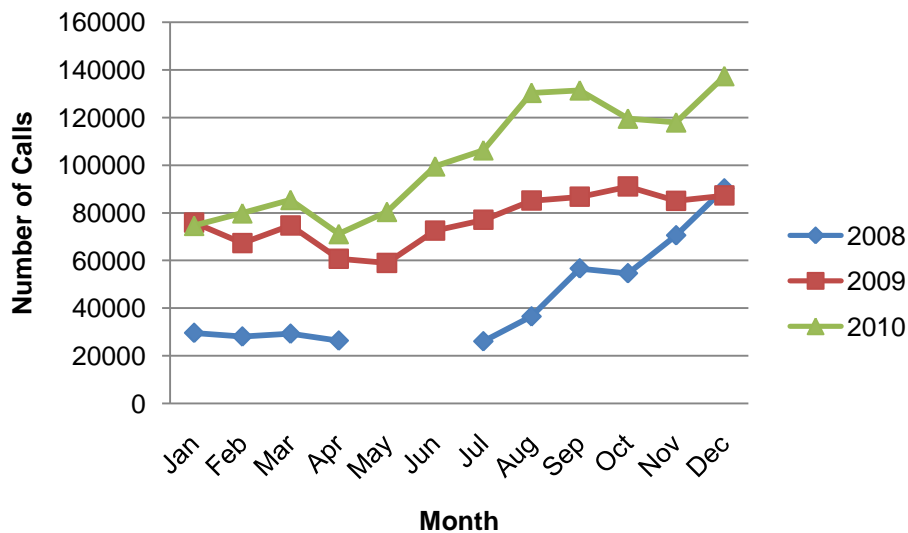


Figure 3: Call Volume (2008 – 2010)

According to the monthly breakdown of the call volume, the second quarter of the year shows a less call volume compared to the other periods of the year (Figure 4).



* Data for May and June 2008 are missing due to a system fault at GIC during that period

Figure 4: Monthly Breakdown of the Call Volume (2008 – 2010)

GIC commenced with 15 Government Organizations, but now represents over 120 Organizations. The number of Government Organizations hosting their information in the knowledgebase has been increased significantly over the last three years, in order to cater to the increasing demand of the general public (Figure 5).

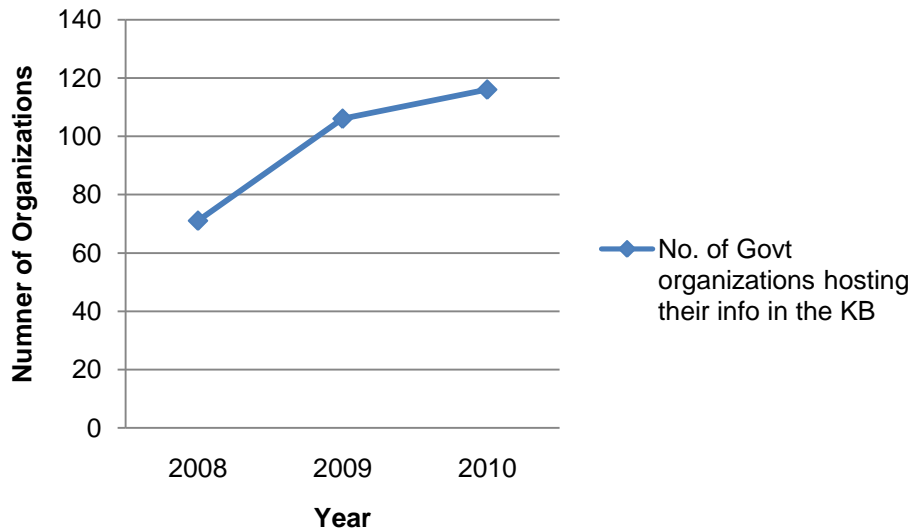


Figure 5: Government Organizations Hosting Information in GIC (2008 – 2010)

During the year 2010, a substantial percentage (95%) of calls that have been received by GIC, were in Sinhala language. Only 3% of calls have been received in Tamil language (Figure 6).

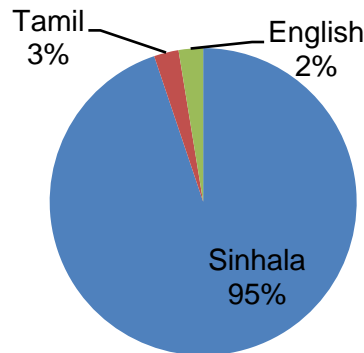


Figure 6: Status of Calls Received - 2010

The district-wise breakdown of the call volume during the year 2010 highlights the significant number of calls received from Colombo district (38%), compared to all other districts (Figure 7).

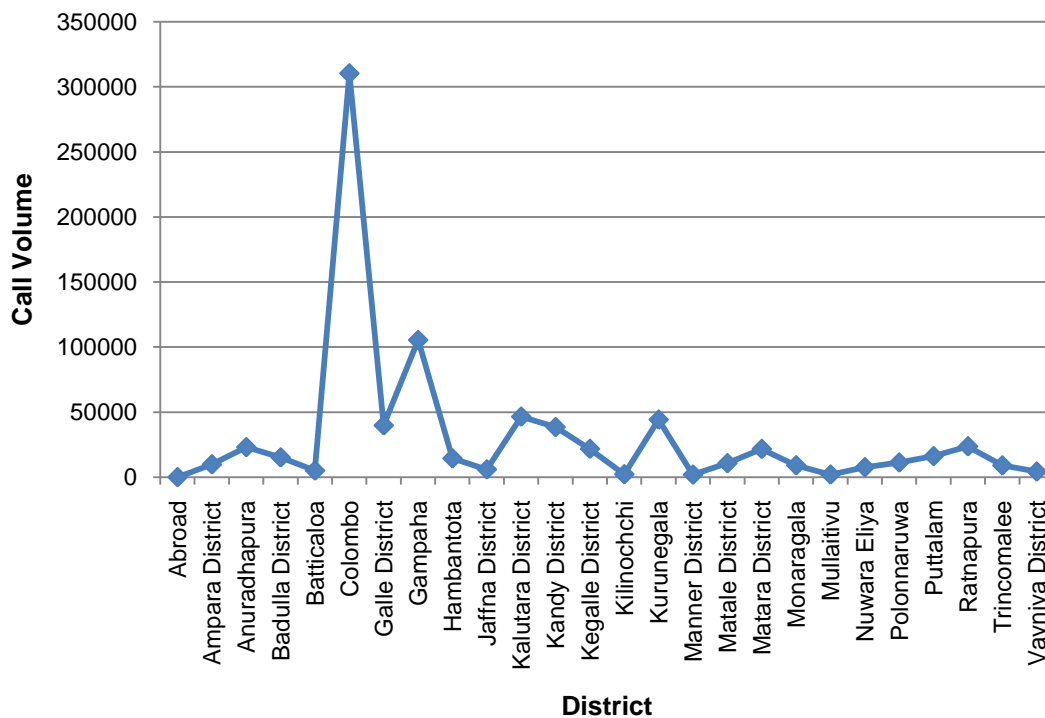


Figure 7: District-wise Breakdown of the Call Volume - 2010

Also during the year 2010, the highest call volume has been observed during the morning hours, while the evening hours have shown a declining call volume (Figure 8).

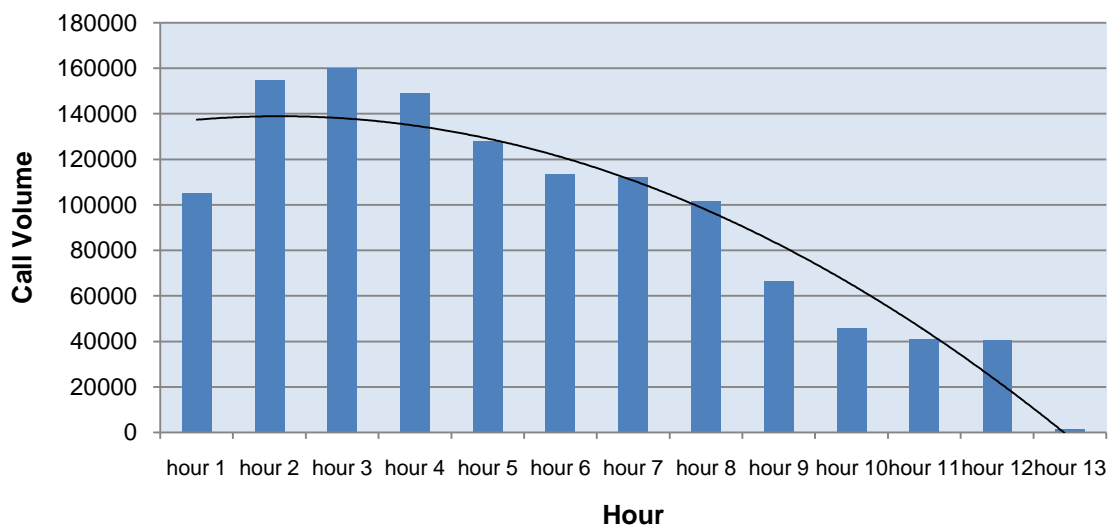


Figure 8: Hourly Distribution of Call Volume - 2010

The top 5 Government organizations that were in demand and the percentage of calls received during the year 2010 are given below in Table 4:

Table 4: Government Organizations in Demand - 2010

Department	Percentage of Calls (%)
Sri Lanka Railway Department	12.87
Department of Motor Traffic	8.24
Divisional Secretariat	7.69
Department of Police	6.12
Department of Immigration & Emigration	5.07

During the year 2010, the percentage of answered calls has remained over 85%, except during the months of August and September (Figure 9).

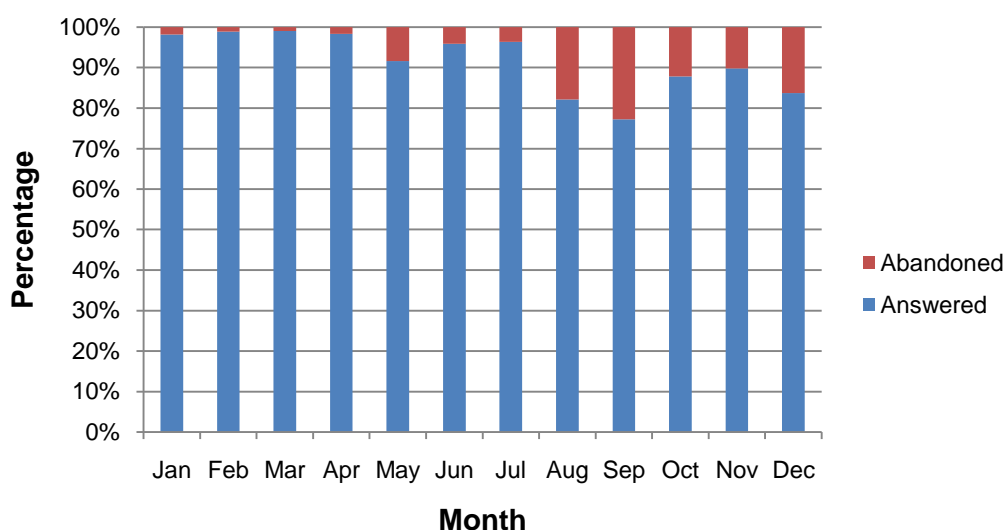


Figure 9: Status of Calls Received - 2010

The average number of hang-up calls has remained around 300 – 400 during the year, except during the month of October, which has received over 600 calls (Figure 10).

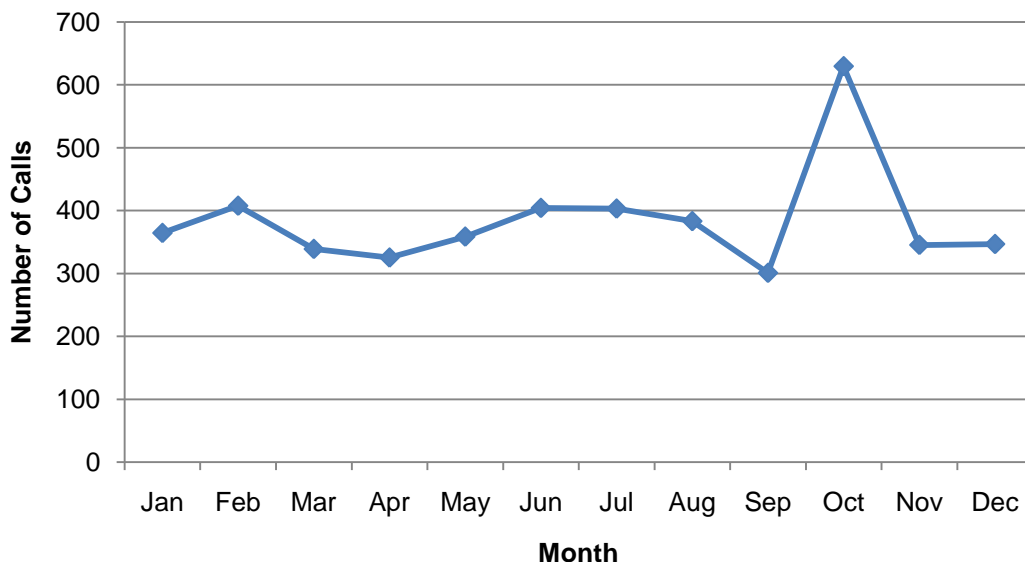


Figure 10: Average No. of Hang-up Calls - 2010

4.3 User Satisfaction on Quality, Accuracy, Adequacy and Relevance of Information

4.3.1 Users of Call Centre (1919)

During the period from mid December 2010 to mid January 2011 (one month) a total of 45,738 calls have been received by GIC. The highest number of callers was found from the District of Colombo (Figure 11). The second highest number of users was observed from the District of Gampaha. Lesser numbers of callers were found from all the Districts of Northern Province; i.e. Jaffna, Mannar, Mulativu, Kilinochchi and Vavunia Districts.

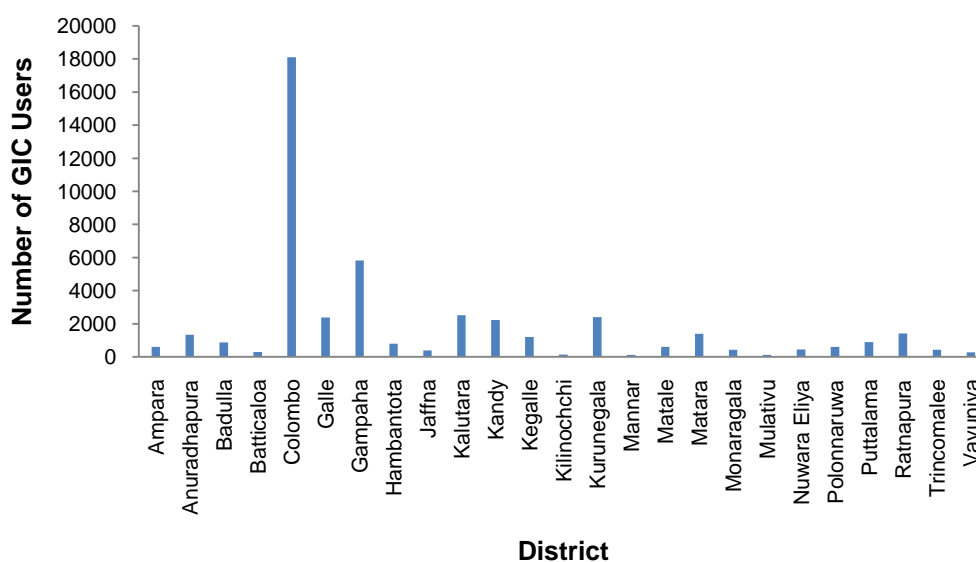


Figure 11: District-wise Breakdown of GIC Users

Out of the callers 56% have got to know about GIC and its services via the television and 25% by news papers (Figure 12).

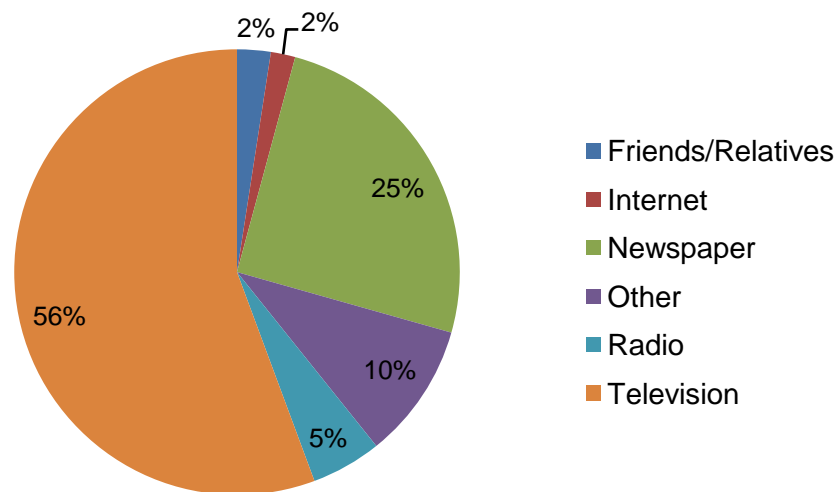


Figure 12: Sources of Information on GIC and Its Services

More than 50% of the callers have contacted GIC mainly to get contact numbers, fax numbers and addresses of Government organizations. Moreover, 95% of the Callers have been able to get the required information from GIC (Figure 13).

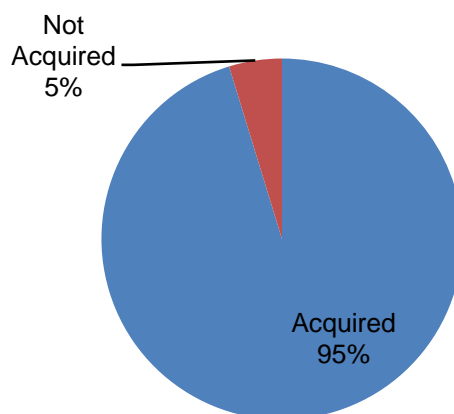


Figure 13: Status of Information Acquisition

Out of the GIC caller sample during the period from mid December 2010 to mid January 2011 (one month), 79% majority were males and the rest were females. 42% of the users were form public sector and 32% were from private sector. The occupational breakdown of the users is given in Figure 14.

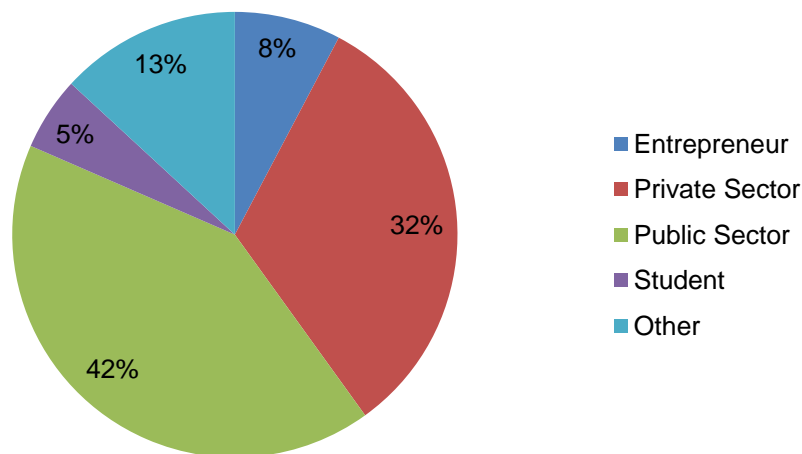


Figure 14: Occupational Breakdown of GIC Users (Callers)

Satisfaction of callers on service delivery of GIC was calculated using service delivery quality measures. As shown in Figure 15, it was noted that more than 85% of the callers are satisfied about all the service delivery quality measures.

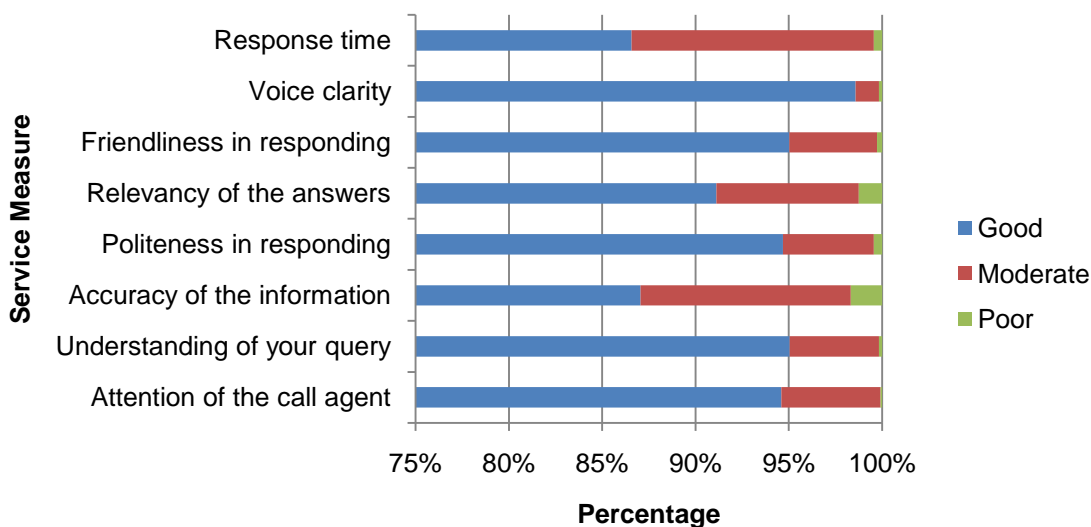


Figure 15: User Satisfaction on GIC Service Delivery (Quality Measures)

In general 95% of the callers are satisfied about GIC and the nature of service delivery whereas only 1% is not satisfied with the GIC services (Figure 16).

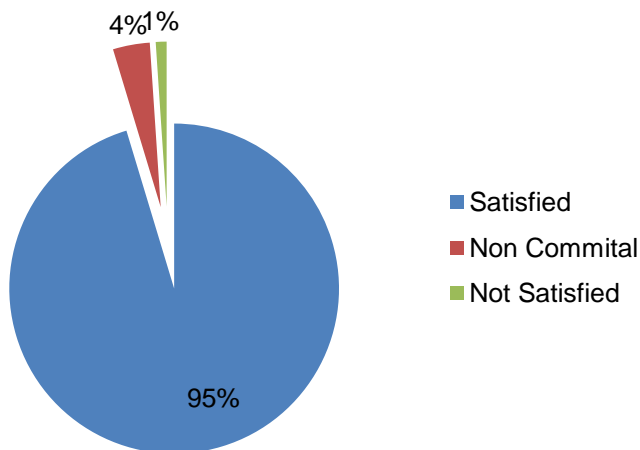


Figure 16: Overall Satisfaction on GIC and its services

It was revealed that 99% of the respondents are willing to obtain the GIC services again and are happy to recommend GIC to others. The public expects this service to be continued over the years to provide more accurate, updated information on Government services in an efficient and effective manner.

4.3.2 Users of GIC Website

GIC website was developed in December 2009 and it is maintained by the ICTA. The website provides information in all three languages, but the information available in Tamil is comparatively low. From the inception of GIC, more than 650,000 have visited the website by 31st of March 2011. This number is very low when compared to the number of calls that GIC/1919 received since inception.

ICTA has also provided facilities to make queries / complaints through GIC website, but it has received less than 300 queries / complaints after the provision of these facilities.

For our study the web users' opinions were gathered by an online questionnaire placed in GIC website. The questions were presented in all three languages. The link to the questionnaire (http://gic.gov.lk/gic/survey/oes_for_gic_form.php) was also e-mailed to the web users who have made queries / complaints through GIC website.

Out of the GIC web users, the majority (66%) was males and the rest was females. 49% of users were employed in private sector, followed by 24% in public sector. It is also noted that 11% of web users were students (Figure 17).

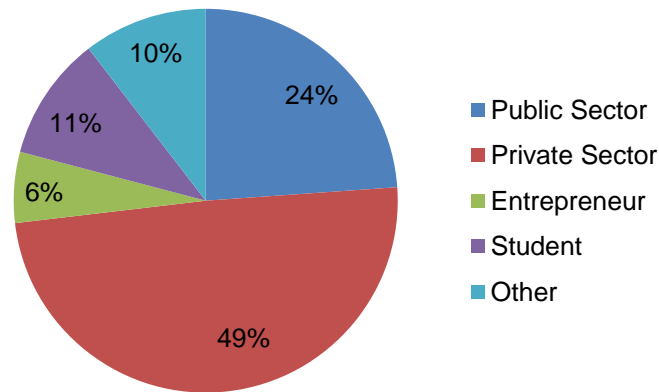


Figure 17: Web Users Breakdown by Sector of Occupation

The users have got to know about GIC website mainly through Internet. A considerable number of users have been directed by their friends to use the GIC website (Figure 18).

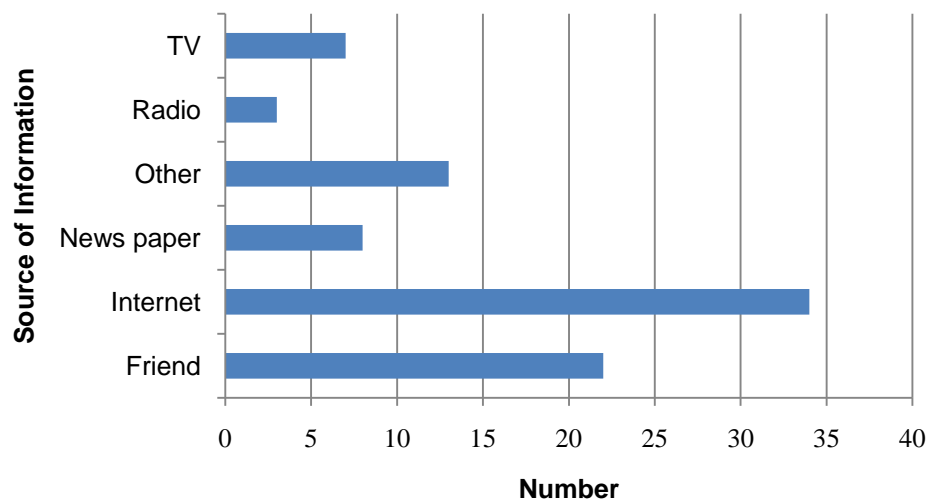


Figure 18: Information Sources on GIC Website

The study revealed that 42% of users access GIC web from home followed by 38% from office (Figure 19). It is also found that 8% of web users access GIC website using their mobile phones.

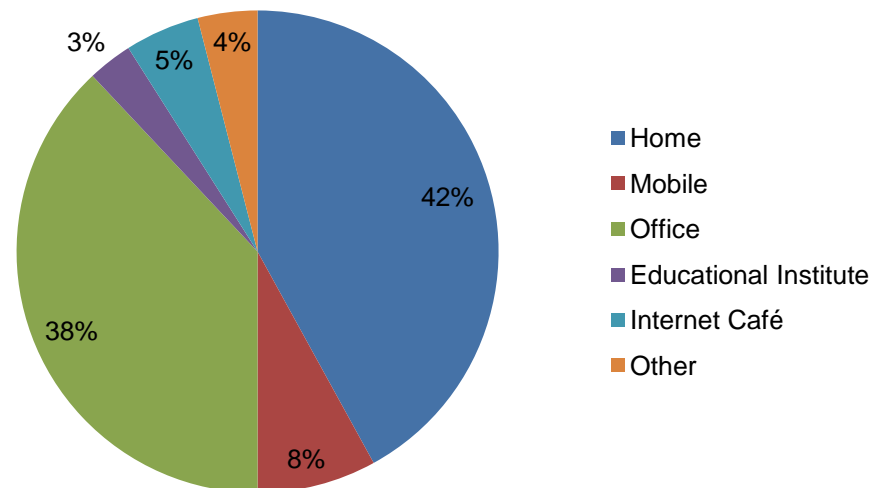


Figure 19: Place of Accessing GIC Web

It was found that 78% of the web users have accessed GIC website during the period from 1st of January to 31st of March 2011 and on average they have accessed GIC website at least thrice a month to obtain information on Government services. It was also noted that 84% of web users have managed to get the required information through GIC website.

As shown in Figure 20, on average more than 85% of the GIC web users were satisfied with the user friendliness, structural design and its context and services provided.

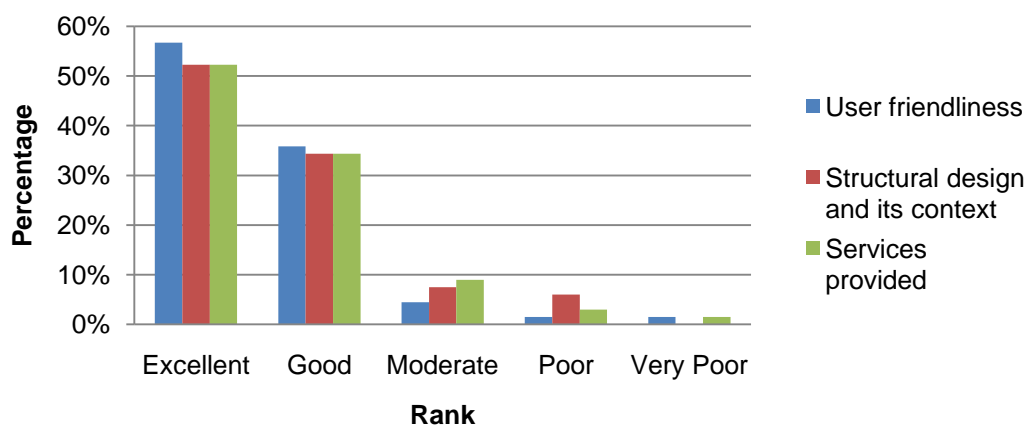


Figure 20: User Opinion on Different Aspects of GIC Website

It is also noted that more than 80% of the GIC users were satisfied with the quality of services provided through GIC website. The level of satisfaction on different aspects of the website was given in Figure 21.

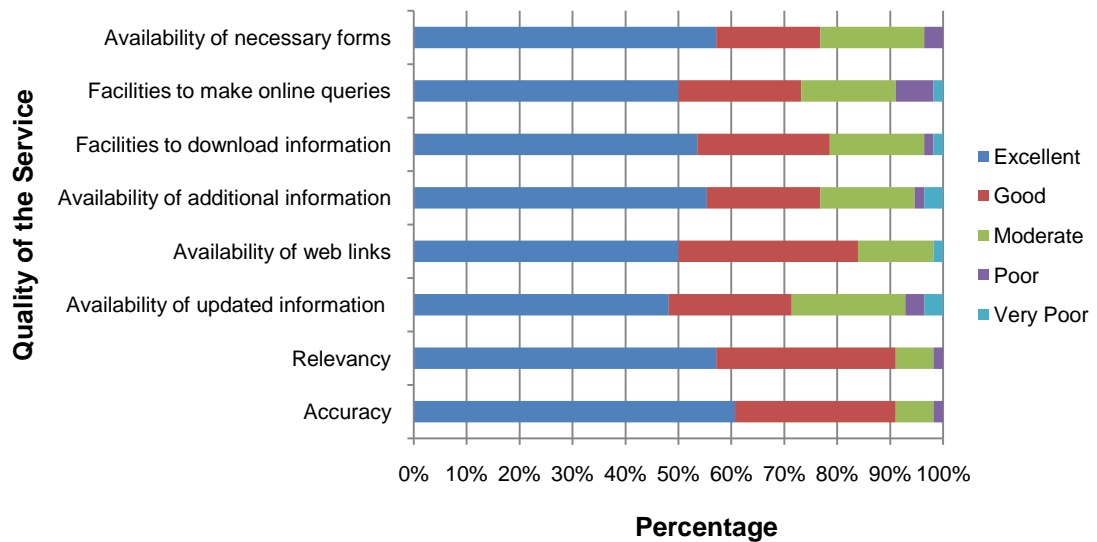


Figure 21: User Opinion on Quality of the Services

The study revealed that more than 95% of the users were willing to use GIC website in the future and they were also willing to recommend GIC website for others to obtain information on Government services.

4.4 Benefits to the General Public

4.4.1 Benefits of the Call Centre

By using GIC (call centre), general public can obtain accurate information immediately. It is easy, time saving and the information about many services can be obtained from one place. There is no need to visit Government institutes to get information, no need to wait and waste time in institutions to obtain information; hence it saves time and expenses during the visits. Ultimately the GIC helps people to make their day to day work easier by minimizing the burden of obtaining information on Government services. The advantages of using the call centre as indicated by the callers are given in the Table 5.

Table 5: Advantages of Using GIC

Advantage	Rank and %*
Time saved / reduction in the number of days spent to obtain relevant information	1 (83%)
Facilitated collection of accurate information	2 (78%)
Reduced number of visits to relevant institutions	3 (46%)
Cost saving (in terms of travelling, purchasing, etc.)	4 (45%)
Made day-to-day work easy (e.g. train schedules, etc.)	5 (21%)
Facilitated collection and submission of required application forms	6 (10%)

*Percentages were based on multiple answers

The majority of the users of the call centre have suggested that more awareness campaigns should be carried out to make the general public well informed about the GIC. The need for improving the knowledgebase of the GIC by adding information

on more Government organizations has been highlighted. It has also been suggested to include some private institutions such as hospitals and banks in addition to linking the entire state sector with the GIC.

Some people have suggested that the call centre to be kept in operation throughout the day to serve the public. Respondents also have mentioned the need for providing more accurate updated information in all three languages. Another opinion revealed was that the services should be provided free of charge.

4.4.2 Benefits of the Website

Time saving by getting information through GIC website has been identified as the biggest advantage by the web users followed by the collection of accurate information and availability of services in 24 hours. The advantages of using GIC website, as indicated by the respondents is given in the Table 6.

Table 6: Advantages of Using GIC Website

Advantages	Rank and %
Time saved / reduction in the number of days spent to obtain relevant information	1 (24%)
Facilitated collection of accurate information	2 (16%)
Availability (24 hrs)	3 (15%)
Reduced number of visits	4 (14%)
Cost saving	4 (14%)

Most of the web users were satisfied about the services provided through GIC website. But the need for frequent information updates, information in all three languages, more information on Government services / institutions and speedy responses to queries and complaints were highlighted as areas to be taken into consideration in the future.

4.5 Impact of GIC on the Performance of Government Organizations

Government Organizations are the main stakeholders of GIC project. At present over 120 Government Institutes are linked with GIC and the information on services of those organizations are available in GIC knowledgebase. GIC activities in Government Organizations are coordinated through a “GIC Coordinator”, who is appointed by the organization in consultation with ICTA.

The nature of the link of the Government Organizations with the GIC based on provision of services through multiple channels is presented in Figure 22. The majority (63%) of the Government organizations have been providing services through the call centre and the website.

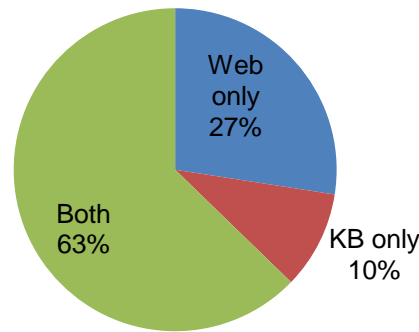


Figure 22: Type of Link

It is noted that there is a considerable demand for the information on some selected organizations; i.e. Department of Railways and Department of Motor Traffic, whereas there is no demand for information on some other organizations. The Figure 23 below shows the top ten Government information / organizations in demand.

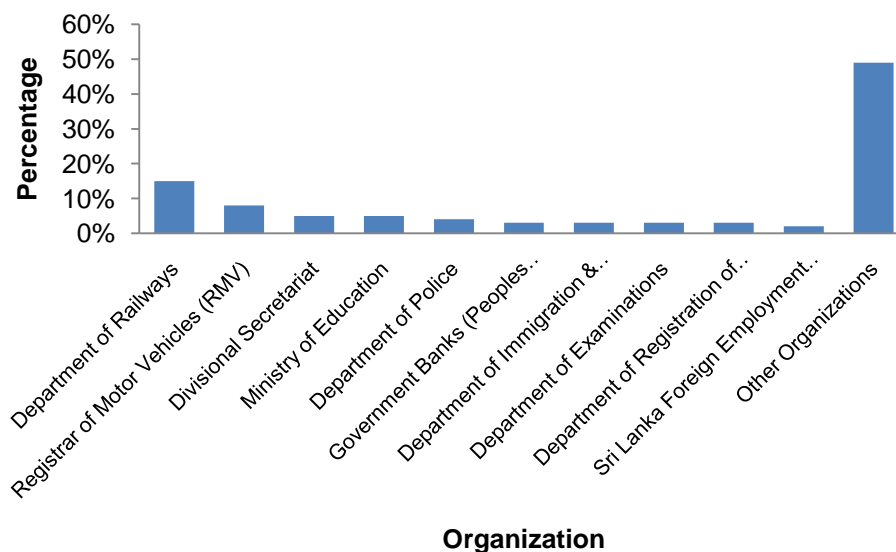


Figure 23: Demand for Services of Government Organizations

After the introduction of GIC, positive changes have been observed in providing Government services to general public. Other than public awareness on Government Organizations and its services, other changes have not been very significant but still the changes show a positive impact on the Government Sector.

Figure 24 below shows the nature of the change. The awareness on Government Organizations and services has been increased and therefore the citizens tend to get the work done through a telephone call instead of visiting the organization. The time spent at an organization to get the work done has been reduced and the number of applications rejected has been lessened.

At the same time some of the Government organizations have increased the number of staff to assist general public and the time taken to handle queries has been reduced. The number of public complaints has also been lessened.

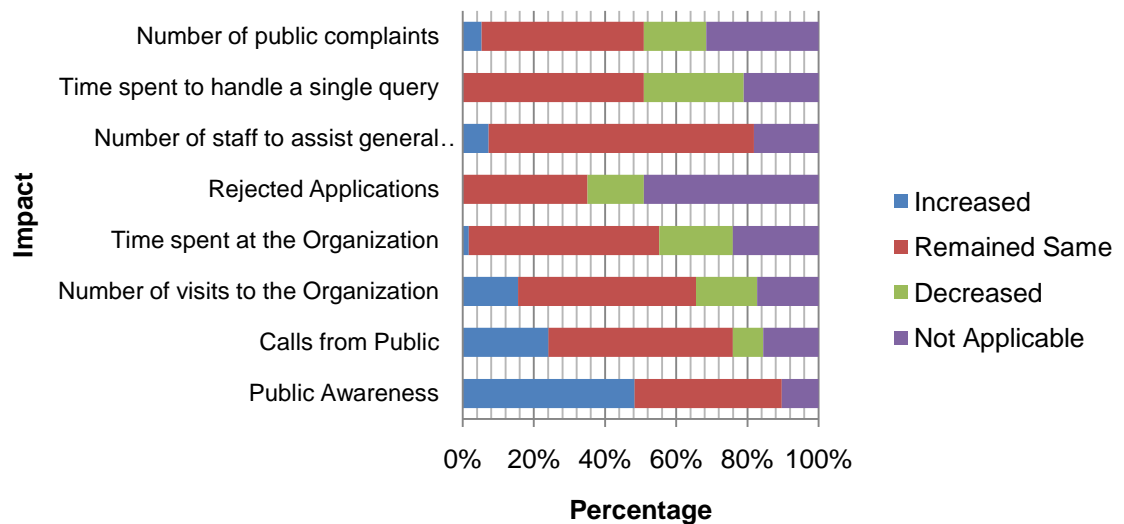


Figure 24: Impact of GIC on Government Organizations

Human resource constraints are a major obstacle in Government Organizations. Human resource scarcity occurs both in terms of the availability of expertise to update the information bases and in terms of the speed at which organizations can efficiently contribute to the system.

Although most of the Government Organizations have the technology, some of the personnel who have been appointed as GIC coordinators are not IT savvy and have not been trained properly to carry out the activities related to GIC. Only 68% of the respondents have gone through training or capacity development activities related to GIC (Figure 25).

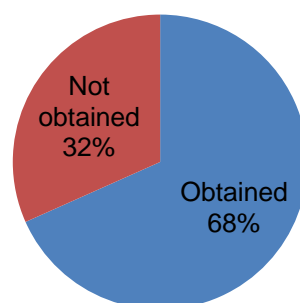


Figure 25: Training or Capacity Development Activities related to GIC

Some of the Government organizations do not possess sufficient staff to be involved in GIC related activities. Moreover, due to language restrictions the Government

Organizations face difficulties in providing and updating information in all three languages.

The position of the GIC Coordinator has not been specified in the permanent cadre of the Government Sector and therefore an IT savvy person has been nominated to coordinate with GIC. The GIC Coordinator gets involved in GIC activities, while attending to other day to day activities assigned to him/her under the employment category of relevance. Due to this reason less time is spent for GIC activities and it has not been identified as a priority of the organization. On the other hand, more than 50% of GIC Coordinators have less than 2 years experience in the field.

Also non-existence of proper plans to nominate new GIC Coordinators during transfers and retirements has been a major impediment for uninterrupted commitment to coordinate with GIC.

More than 2/3 of the Government Organizations depend directly on the appointed coordinators for GIC related activities. As some of the heads and the staff of the Government Organizations are not aware of the importance of GIC; the coordinator does not get the fullest cooperation from the organization in terms of providing information to the knowledgebase and updating information.

Figure 26 below illustrates the respondents' ideas on available resources and other facilities to carryout GIC related activities.

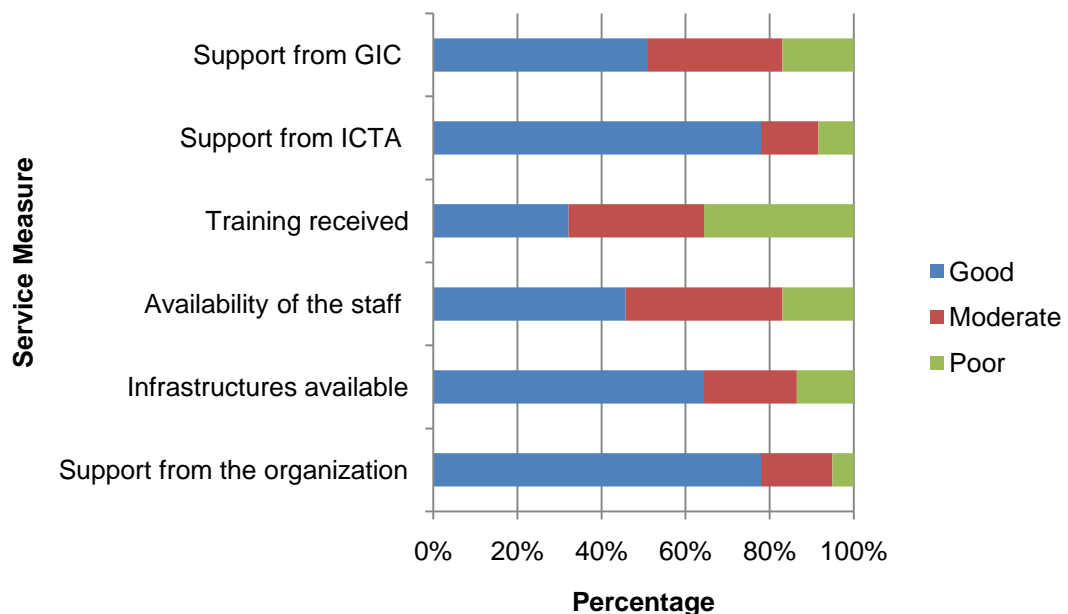


Figure 26: Facilities and Resources to carryout the Activities related to GIC

According to the ICTA Managers, collecting all required information from Government Organizations has become the biggest issue as most of the information are currently available in manual formats such as documents, circulars, acts, etc. Converting this information into electronic formats in all three languages requires a considerable period of time. Therefore, the existence of information gaps is evident in relation to most of the Government Organizations.

The majority of the Government Organizations do not possess a proper monitoring mechanism to monitor GIC related activities. Also it is revealed that the coordination between GIC, ICTA and some Government Organizations is not at a very satisfactory level and as a result, inefficiency of the services is being experienced.

4.6 Call Handling Process

At present 20 “Call Agents” are working in GIC and they are closely supervised by two “Quality Controllers”. The centre and its activities are overseen by a Centre Manager and the whole process is monitored by the ICTA.

Over 35000 calls per week are handled by GIC at present; a call agent handles around 400 calls per day. This is comparatively a high volume and the available technology, resources and facilities are sufficient to manage the process.

The majority (72%) of the call agents have the proficiency in both Sinhala and English Languages, while 7% of them have proficiency in all three languages. The language proficiency of the call agents is presented below in Figure 27.

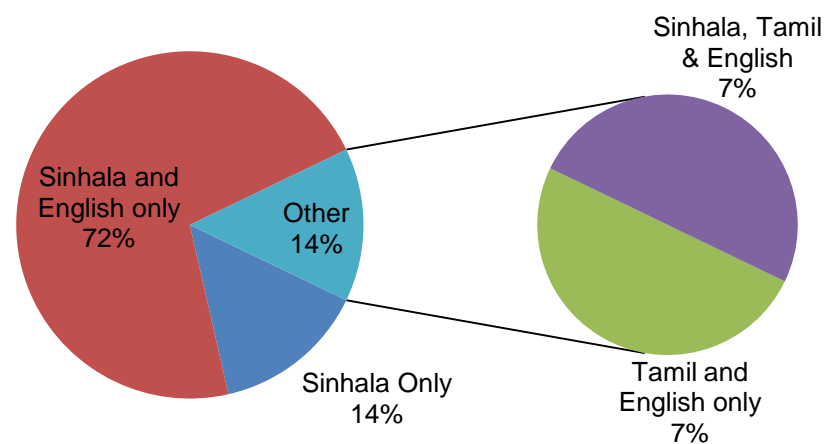


Figure 27: Language Proficiency of Call Agents

According to the observations made regarding the call agents, it was evident that most of them are performing their duties at a satisfactory level even with a high call volume. The Figure 28 shows the characteristics of call agents as observed by the Consultants during this particular study.

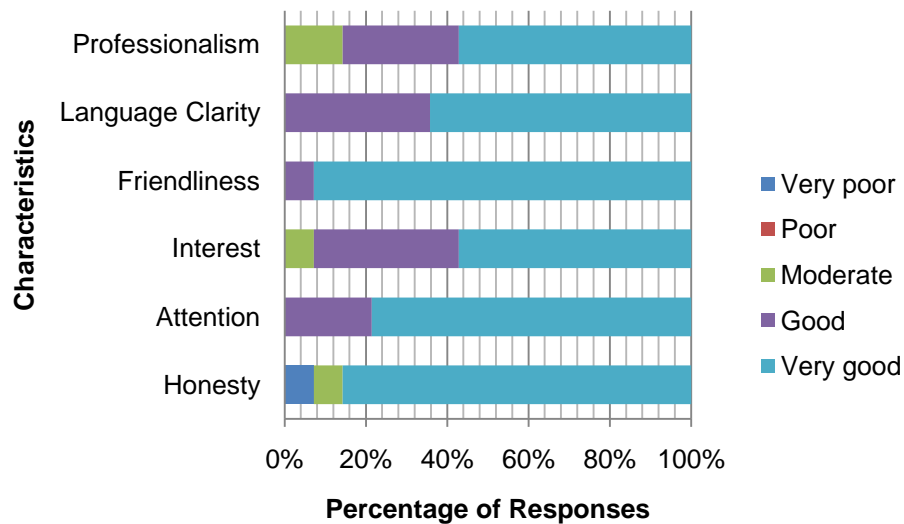


Figure 28: Characteristics of Call Agents

4.7 Issues Faced by GIC Staff

The technology and facilities available at GIC is sufficient to carryout day to day activities. However, there is a need to improve the facilities and the technology with time to handle the high call volume. In order to improve the quality, accuracy and speed of the responses, the need for a more spacious and disturbance free work environment was also felt.

The general idea of the call agents in relation to existing working environment and the available facilities at the centre is illustrated in Figure 29.

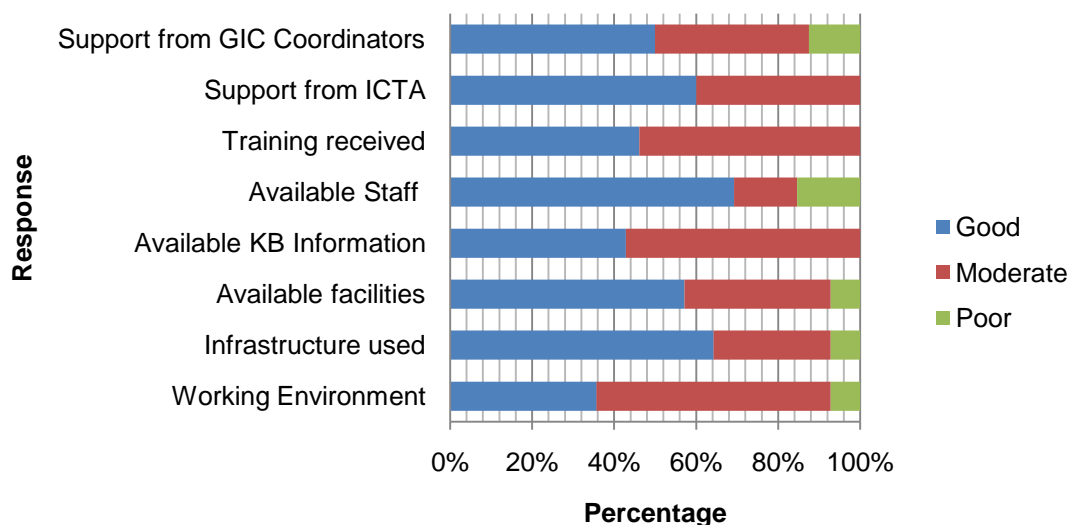


Figure 29: Facilities and Available Resources at GIC

The available members of the staff are generally talented and possess communication skills and telephone ethics at a satisfactory level. However, the new recruits do not have sufficient skills to handle the knowledgebase as they have not been given a appropriate training at the initial stage. Therefore, the need for continuous on-the-job training and supervision was highlighted by the quality controllers and supervisors of the call centre.

It was observed that there is a need for additional staff / call agents to handle the day to day call volume. At the times of high call volume the “hang on time” increases and the lines get busy. It is also noted that the number of unanswered calls go beyond 10% during certain months. Therefore employing sufficient staff is an urgent requirement to improve the service quality.

Out of the respondents, 43% are satisfied with their job (Figure 30). The dissatisfaction is mainly due to insufficient salaries and unavailability of time for further education. This is clearly indicated by the comparatively high staff attrition in GIC. Hence, the new recruits take time to catch up the speed and the information available on knowledgebase. According to the call agents the high attrition rate could be due to work stress, absence of a career ladder and insufficient salaries.

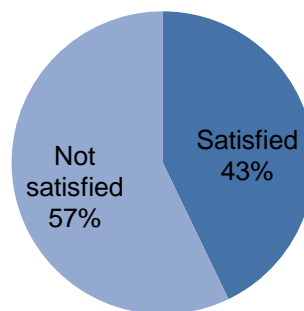


Figure 30: Call Agents' Satisfaction

The available knowledgebase itself is a limitation to provide information. The available knowledgebase is not sufficient to provide certain information and most of the information is not being updated speedily. Most of the information is available in Sinhala and English; but the information available in Tamil is limited. This situation is seen in the GIC website also. Most of the information are not up to date and has not been updated regularly.

Coordination gaps are also observed among ICTA, Government Organizations and GIC. GIC and ICTA do not get sufficient support from some Government Organizations with regard to information updates and handling queries / complaints.

4.8 Updating the Knowledgebase, Responding to Queries and Handling Complaints

The quality controllers and supervisors of GIC have been involved in updating and validating information in the knowledgebase on a regular basis in consultation with the ICTA. If necessary, sometimes updated information is directly obtained from the relevant Government Organization and provided to citizens after obtaining the consent of ICTA. In cases where the citizens make complaints of outdated information, measures have been taken to correct that immediately by referring to ICTA and the relevant Government Organization.

According to the coordinators of the Government Organizations, only 5% of the organizations update information in the knowledgebase on a daily basis. The majority (64%) of the organizations have not been involved in updating information regularly. (Figure 31)

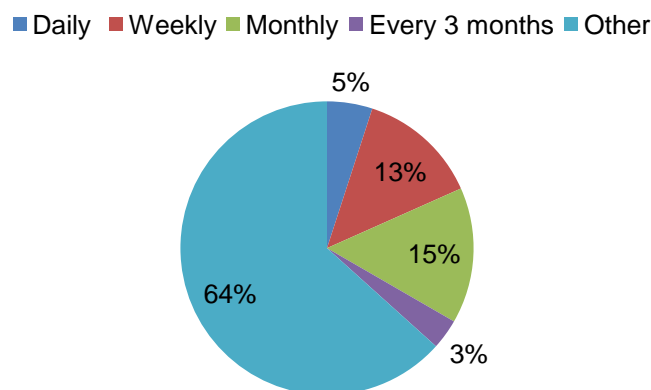


Figure 31: Frequency of Updating Information

According to the heads of the Government Institutions, the information validation process takes time as it has to be channelled through. Generally, the information needs to be certified by the Heads of the Departments and the Head of the Organization before submission to ICTA for updating the knowledgebase. Although this process is time consuming, the accuracy of updated information has been very high as the information is checked repeatedly when passing through this channel.

On average a Government Organization receives 6 queries through GIC – Call Centre and 1 query through GIC Website per month and they take 3-4 days to respond to a query. The average number of personnel assigned to handle GIC related activities per organization is 3. The difficulty in providing information in all 3 languages has been identified as a severe challenge by the coordinators in the Government Organizations, while lack of staff / trained staff remains as another major constraint. Table 7 below shows the main challenges faced by the coordinators in relation to updating the knowledgebase, responding to queries and handling complaints.

Table 7: Main Challenges Faced by the Coordinators in Government Organizations

Challenge	Rank
Difficulties in providing information in all 3 languages	1 (30%)
Lack of staff / trained staff	2 (22%)
Lack of awareness and knowledge among staff	3 (12%)
Equipment and technology is not up to date	4 (10%)
Obtaining timely updated information from relevant divisions/ branches	4 (10%)

4.9 Sustainability of GIC

According to the ICTA managers as well as the Heads of Government Organizations, GIC in Sri Lanka has been a success story over the past 5 years. As the demand for GIC services has shown a significant increase over the years (Figure 32), there is a proven compatibility of GIC project with the development process in the country.

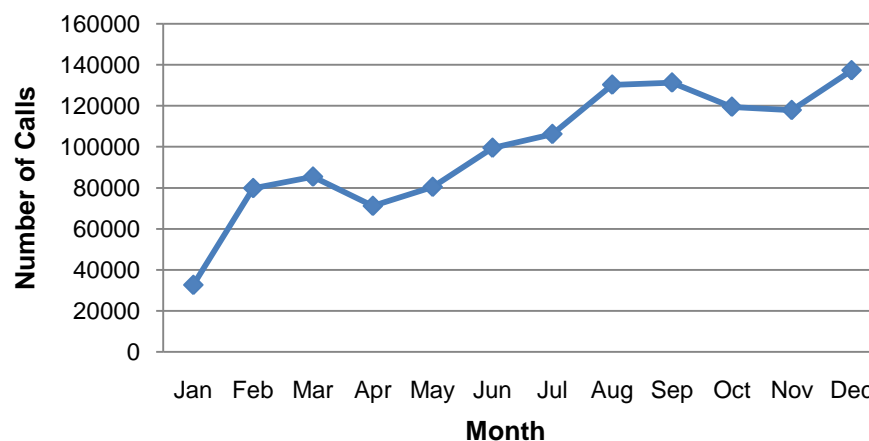


Figure 32: Monthly Analysis of the Total Calls Received - 2010

As per the stakeholders, who are involved in operational and management aspects of GIC Project, following aspects are to be considered for the achievement of sustainability.

- a) Adequate resource planning, accurate identification of user needs and catering to the changing needs of the community
- b) Application of a Business Type Model for GIC operations (letting the person to listen to advertisements related to Government services while he / she is waiting online for additional information. There are a number of profit making bodies belonging to Government and most of them are spending money for advertising in various types of media channels)
- c) Charging from profit making Government bodies such as Government Banks, Insurance Companies, etc., for providing their services through GIC

The Heads of Government Institutions expressed the importance of a “private –public partnership” by adding information of private institutes to the system, while getting financial support from those organizations to operate GIC.

4.10 Future Expansion

It is revealed that most of the Government Organizations which are not presently linked with GIC are interested in providing information through GIC. ICTA is in the process of increasing the coverage of GIC services by including the organizations of relevance to the knowledgebase, while continuing its efforts to update and improve the information on available organizations.

More than 50% of the Heads of Government Organizations, which are linked with GIC, emphasized the need for providing more accurate, up-to-date information in a systematic way in order to improve the service quality and efficiency while linking more Government institutes to the GIC. They also commented on the importance of making general public and the Government sector employees more aware on GIC and its services.

The Consultants interviewed 15 heads of Government Organizations, which are not linked with GIC (Annex 2) and out of those, some organizations are in the process of linking with GIC, while the information of other organizations have been provided through the relevant Ministries. The organizations which have been providing information through their own websites and other information providing mechanisms, have not shown much interest towards providing information through GIC. This was prominent among media related institutes, which believe that their information providing mechanisms are stronger in comparison to GIC.

It was revealed that most of the organizations do not possess proper plans on the kind of information to be provided through GIC, as they have not been made aware and have not been requested to provide information through GIC. However, the majority of the organizations are willing to provide information through GIC and have the required physical and financial resources as well as the technology to link with GIC.

Only a few organizations do not possess the required skilled staff to match with the requirements of the GIC activities. In general, all the organizations, which are still not linked, identify GIC as a beneficial venture to both general public and to the Government Organizations.

5. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Public Awareness

GIC as an information base for governance and public administration has become one of the most important projects in Sri Lanka and has been a high priority concern in Re-engineering Government Programme of the e-SLDP. However, the awareness and knowledge of the public on the services provided by GIC needs to be improved as a considerable percentage (71%) of the public have not even heard of GIC.

The majority of the GIC users (86%) have become aware of GIC through mass media (i.e. television, radio and news papers). Therefore, extended usage of mass media can be applied in order to make the general public aware of GIC and its services. As carried out with Sinhala channels it is necessary to promote GIC through Tamil channels as well in order to make the people in Northern and Eastern Provinces aware of the advantages they can obtain from GIC.

5.2 Usage and Satisfaction

It is a notable fact that the citizens of Sri Lanka have shown an increasing trend of dependence on GIC over the other channels due to accuracy, loyalty and cost savings experienced by them. The highest number of users was found from the District of Colombo. This can be attributed to high awareness, higher availability and easy access to communication facilities, high population density and existence of many Government organizations within the district.

Citizens are heavily using the information on programmes (train schedules, etc.), which often have the advantage of providing more targeted information and functionality than broader Government services. In general the high and rising levels of satisfaction with GIC indicates citizens' eagerness to interact with Government through GIC.

Satisfaction of the general public on GIC services is found to be at a high level, which shows an increasing reliance on the information provided by the centre. However, it is also revealed that the users are happy to interact with GIC, but are having difficulties in finding the information they need in relation to certain Government Organizations. Therefore, the officials in Government Organizations need to step up their efforts to improve information bases in GIC. To achieve this, the internal arrangements within the Government Organizations to provide updated information to the GIC need to be enhanced. The development of information infrastructure, information resources, and information systems within the organization has to be planned and managed in order to provide an efficient and effective service through GIC.

5.3 Role of Government Organizations

A commitment was observed from the Government Departments and Ministries to provide better services online. Identifying and making targeted improvements in the knowledgebase in response to the needs of the citizens has become a focus of many of the Government Organizations, which are linked with GIC.

One of the key challenges, that has been identified by the Government Organizations is the low IT literacy in Government, which has resulted in the lack of skilled staff to handle GIC related activities. Due to this reason, in many instances the Government processes and systems are reinforced rather than transformed. As a result, even after the introduction of GIC, citizens continue to visit some of the Government Organizations to access public services as the system has not been able to fulfil the needs of the citizens to the expected extent.

Based on the views of the coordinators of Government Organizations, below mentioned improvements are suggested to the existing project.

1. Appoint full time personnel to handle GIC activities in Government Organizations and provide them with a job specific training
2. Create awareness among citizens and top level Government officers on GIC and ICTA
3. Update knowledgebase / website frequently. Link GIC and Government organizations online, in order to update GIC information
4. Direct more funds towards GIC and provide advance equipment and technology to carryout GIC related activities
5. Improve the coordination between ICTA, GIC and Government Organizations through organizing meetings at optimum intervals (quarterly)
6. Improve the knowledgebase through linking more Government Organizations, increasing the coverage of already linked organizations and adding information of provincial and regional level institutions

5.4 Improvement of Call Handling Process

Since non-existence of up to date information will defeat the objectives of GIC, it is important to have a proper plan to get updated information from a particular organization once it is linked to GIC. These plans have to be based on the facts that the availability of most of the documents in manual formats and the absence of information in all three national languages. The relevant Government Organization should be directed towards converting information into electronic formats through appropriate funding and other resource allocation mechanisms in place. Moreover, there is a need to encourage the top level officers of the Government Institutions by making them aware of the importance of GIC and the validity of information.

In relation to human resource aspects, it is appropriate to improve the knowledge of the call-agents at least in organizations in demand i.e. Motor Traffic Department, Department of Registration of Persons, Emigration & Immigration Department, Labour Department and Registrar Generals Department, etc. Moreover, a sufficient

number of call agents should be allocated by looking at call trends, peak times during the day and during certain days / months of the year.

Based on the responses of call agents, the study identifies and prioritizes following information elements in the existing knowledgebase for improvement, meaning that improvements in these areas will result in increased satisfaction, returning of calls and use of the centre as the primary resource. Priorities differ depending on the organization, but we are able to make some generalization as a whole.

1. Include all the Government Organizations
2. Include all the relevant telephone numbers
3. Include all the services (at least the most important services)
4. Provide updates regularly to increase accuracy of information
5. Include more details and specific documentation procedures including branches of the Departments, Ministries and their relevant information

5.5 Sustainability of the Project

There is a clear relationship between acceptability of GIC services by people and the call volume. The increasing call volume reflects that the people are readily accepting GIC services. Therefore, it has been realized over the past 5 years that if the capabilities of ICT are matched with appropriate development strategies for improving GIC, the sustainability in the long run of the project will certainly be an achievable prospect.

Given the budgetary limitations of Sri Lanka as a developing country, in order to assure the sustainability of the project, application of a Business Type Model for GIC operations has been identified as one possibility by the top level implementation partners of the project. The project needs to develop some marketing strategies and product driven approaches as practised by the private sector

5.6 Role of Government

According to ICTA managers as well as the top level officers of the key Government Organizations, public policy is crucial to successful acquisition and diffusion of GIC services. The tremendous speed with which information technology is evolving causes confusion, delays, and false expectations for these solutions by many decision makers and Government officers. Misconceptions about the capabilities and limitations of the new technology, inappropriate development strategies, ambiguous development priorities, inadequate resource planning, incomplete cost estimates, misjudged user needs, etc. often cause this kind of projects to fail. Therefore, appropriate Government policies are necessary to remove distortions in any macroeconomic or social policies which would prevent efficient supply and demand for GIC services. As practised during the recent period, the Government should continue to play an important role as a facilitator, a coordinator and a strategist for improvement of the GIC Project by providing necessary resources and funding.

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ANNEX I - Study Sample

Table 1: Sampling overview of the survey

Respondent	Method	Population	Sample Size	Sampling Technique
Callers	Telephone interviews	144395 (After removing callers abroad)	750	PSRS
Callers	Face to Face interviews	144395	400	PSRS
All web users, who made complaints via e-mail	Online / Email questionnaire	> 200	> 200	100% sampling
Web Users	Online questionnaire	Not known	All respondents	
GIC Coordinators	In-depth interview	127	60	RS
Call Agents	In-depth interview	16	16	100% sampling
Quality Controllers and Supervisors	Focused Group Discussion	03	03	100% sampling
ICTA Managers	In-depth interview	05	05	100% sampling
General Public	Telephone interview	20,450,000 (Approximately)	750	PSRS
Head of Gvt. Institutes	In-depth interview	127	60	RS
Heads of Gov. Institutes which are considered to be linked with GIC at next phase	In-depth interview	80	20	RS

Table 2: District wise distribution of the caller, face to face and general public sample

District	Caller (phone-in)		Caller (Face to face)		General Public	
	Population	Sample	Population	Sample	Population ('000)	Sample
Ampara	609	10	609	6	634	23
Anuradhapura	1343	22	1343	12	820	30
Badulla	872	14	872	8	874	32
Batticaloa	285	5	285	5	537	20
Colombo	18100	297	18100	162	2521	92
Galle	2380	39	2380	21	1074	40
Gampaha	5817	95	5817	52	2165	80
Hambantota	788	13	788	7	565	21
Jaffna	386	6	386	0	607	23
Kalutara	2513	41	2513	22	1128	41
Kandy	2221	37	2221	20	1415	52
Kegalle	1206	20	1206	11	813	30
Kilinochchi	133	5	133	0	154	6
Kurunegala	2407	40	2407	22	1550	57
Mannar	113	5	113	0	103	5
Matale	601	10	601	5	490	18
Matara	1388	23	1388	12	831	31
Monaragala	420	7	420	5	435	16
Mulativu	118	5	118	0	154	6
Nuwara Eliya	440	8	440	5	755	28
Polonnaruwa	604	10	604	6	405	15
Puttalama	893	15	893	8	770	29
Ratnapura	1411	23	1411	13	1113	41
Trincomalee	427	7	427	5	368	14
Vavuniya	263	5	263	0	169	6
Total	45738	762	45738	407	20450	756

Interviewed List of Government Organizations, which are linked with GIC

- Board of Investment of Sri Lanka
- Urban Development Authority
- President's Fund
- Department of Probation & Child Care Services
- Department of Coast Conservation
- National Institution of Occupational Health & Safety
- Ministry of Parliamentary Affairs
- Department of Elections
- Ministry of Traditional Industries & Small Enterprise Development
- Mahaweli Development Authority
- Department of Meteorology
- Department of Police
- National Livestock Development Board
- Labour Department
- Department of Wildlife Conservation
- Department of Motor Traffic
- Central Environmental Authority
- HDFC Bank of Sri Lanka
- Civil Aviation Authority of Sri Lanka
- Survey Department
- Department of Registrar of Companies
- Marine Pollution Prevention Authority
- Road Development Authority
- University Grants Commission
- Ministry of Transport
- Prime Minister's Office
- Shrama Wasana Fund Board
- Ministry of Local Government & Provincial Councils
- Tertiary & Vocational Education Commission
- Department of Register General's
- State Timber Corporation
- Department of Rubber Development
- Divisional Secretariat - Colombo
- Samurdhi Authority of Sri Lanka
- Sri Lanka Standards Institution
- Vocational Training Authority of Sri Lanka
- Coconut Development Authority
- Department of Official Languages
- Legal Aid Commission
- Sri Lanka Export Development Board
- Department of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources
- National Housing Development Authority
- Ministry of Environment and Natural Resources
- Coconut Cultivation Board
- Department of National Museums

- Department of Commerce
- Tea Small Holdings Development Authority
- Ministry of Labour Relations & Manpower
- Department of Pensions
- Department of Posts
- Ministry of Education
- Excise Department
- Sri Lanka Bureau of Foreign Employment
- National Apprentice and Industrial Training Authority
- Department of Cultural Affairs
- Sri Lanka Transport Board

Interviewed List of Government Organizations, which are not linked with GIC

- Department of Government Printer
- Sri Lanka Rupavahini Cooperation
- Sri Lanka Radio Broadcasting Cooperation
- Civil Aviation Authority
- Sri Lanka Tourism Development Authority
- Sri Lanka Tourism Promotion Bureau
- National Gem and Jewellery Authority
- Urban Settlement Development Authority
- Sri Lanka Foreign Employment Agency
- Official Language Commission
- National Transport Commission
- Employees Trust Fund
- Department of Poison
- Hector Kobbekaduwa Agrarian Research and Training Institute
- Medical Research Institute

ANNEX II - Study Instruments

Questionnaire for Interviewing Persons who obtained GIC Services over the Telephone (1919) (Telephone Interview)

To be Filled by the Enumerator

1. Name of the Respondent									
2. Gender	Male			Female					
3. Occupation	3.1 Public Sector		3.2 Private Sector		3.3 Entrepren eur		3.4 Student		3.5 Other
4. District									
5. Date									
6. Contact Number					6.1 Private		6.2 Office		
7. Related Organization									
8. Service									

9. How did you get to know about GIC (1919) and its services?

9.1 News paper	9.2 Radio	9.3 TV	9.4 Internet	9.5 Friend	9.6 Other

10. Were you able to get the required information?

10.1 Yes	10.2 No
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11. If no, why?

.....

.....

12. What is your opinion on,

No.		Good	Moderate	Poor
12.1	Attention of the call agent			
12.2	Understanding of your query			
12.3	Accuracy of the information			
12.4	Politeness in responding			
12.5	Relevancy of the answers			
12.6	Friendliness in responding			
12.7	Voice clarity			
12.8	Response time			

13. What were the advantages of using GIC?

No.	Advantages	√	No.		√
13.1	Facilitated collection of accurate information		13.5	Cost saving (in terms of travelling, purchasing, etc.)	
13.2	Facilitated collection and submission of required application forms		13.6	Made day-to-day work easy (e.g. train schedules, etc.)	
13.3	Reduced number of visits to relevant organizations		13.7	Other (Please explain)	
13.4	Time saved / reduction in the number of days spent to obtain relevant information		

14. What is the overall satisfaction about GIC?

No.	Level of Satisfaction	√
14.1	Satisfied	
14.2	Non Committal	
14.3	Not Satisfied	

15. Do you like to use the GIC facilities again?

15.1 Yes		15.2 No	
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16. Please explain the reason

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17. Do you like to recommend the GIC services to others?

17.1 Yes		17.2 No	
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18. Please explain the reason

.....

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19. Do you have any comments or suggestions to improve GIC services?

.....

.....

Questionnaire for Interviewing Persons who obtained GIC Services over the Telephone (1919)
(Face to Face Interview)

To be filled by the Enumerator

1. Name of the Respondent										
2. Gender	Male					Female				
3. Occupation	3.1 Public Sector		3.2 Private Sector		3.3 Entrepreneur		3.4 Student		3.5 Other	
4. District										
5. Date										
6. Contact Number						6.1 Private		6.2 Office		
7. Related Organization										
8. Service										

9. How did you get to know about GIC (1919) and its services?

7.1 News paper	7.2 Radio	7.3 TV	7.4 Internet	7.5 Friend	7.6 Other

10. How many queries have you made to GIC during the past 3 months? _____

11. What is the most recent query?

.....

.....

12. Please indicate the Government Organization(s) related to the above query

.....

.....

13. How long have you been waiting to get connected with the agent? Approx. _____ minutes

14. When connected, were you on hold?

12.1 Yes		12.2 No	
----------	--	---------	--

15. How long did the agent spend to answer? Approx _____ minutes

16. Were you able to get the required information?

14.1 Yes		14.2 No	
----------	--	---------	--

17. If no, why?

.....

.....

18. If the required information was not available with the GIC at the time of call, what was the response of the agent?

18.1	No further action taken	
18.2	The query was referred to another organization	
18.3	Called back with the required information	

19. What is your opinion on;

No.		Good	Moderate	Poor
19.1	Attention of the call agent			
19.2	Understanding of your query			
19.3	Accuracy of the information			
19.4	Relevancy of the answers			
19.5	Voice clarity			
19.6	Response time			
19.7	Politeness in responding			
19.8	Friendliness in responding			

20. What were the advantages of using GIC?

No.	Advantages	√	Please explain
20.1	Facilitated collection of accurate information		
20.2	Facilitated collection and submission of required application forms		
20.3	Reduced number of visits to relevant organizations		
20.4	Time saved / reduction in the number of days spent to obtain relevant information		
20.5	Cost saving (in terms of travelling, purchasing, etc.)		
20.6	Made day-to-day work easy (e.g. train schedules, etc.)		
20.7	Other (Please Explain)		

21. If GIC was not used, what will be the probable cost of getting the information related to your most recent query? (Please probe)

No.	Purpose	Type of cost*	Approximate Amount (Rs)
21.1			
21.2			
21.3			
	Total		

* Travelling – 1; Purchasing/Photocopying – 2, Calling/Internet – 3; Food – 4; Accommodation – 5; Bribes – 6; Other - 7

22. What is the overall satisfaction about GIC?

No.	Level of Satisfaction	√	Please Explain
22.1	Satisfied		
22.2	Non Committal		
22.3	Not Satisfied		

23. Have you made any complaints?

21.1 Yes		21.2 No	
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If no please go to Question 26

24. If yes, what is the complaint?

.....

.....

25. Did they respond to your complaints?

23.1 Yes		23.2 No	
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If no please go to Question 28

26. What is the response time? Approx _____ days

27. What is your opinion on the response?

27.1 Excellent		27.2 Good		27.3 Moderate		27.4 Poor		27.5 Very Poor	
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28. Do you like to use the GIC facilities again?

28.1 Yes		28.2 No	
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29. Please explain your answer

.....

.....

30. Do you like to recommend the GIC services to others?

30.1 Yes		30.2 No	
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31. Please explain your answer

.....

.....

32. Do you have any suggestions / comments to improve the GIC services?

.....

.....

**Questionnaire for Interviewing Persons who obtained GIC Services over the Web
(Online Interview)**

1. E-mail Address					
2. Occupation	2.1 Public Sector	2.2 Private Sector	2.3 Entrepreneur	2.4 Student	2.5 Other
3. Gender	3.1 Male		3.2 Female		

4. How did you get to know about GIC Website and its services?

4.1 Newspaper	4.2 Radio	4.3 TV	4.4 Internet	4.5 Friend	4.6 Other

5. From where do you access the GIC web? (Multiple answers)

No.	From	√
5.1	Home	
5.2	Office	
5.3	Internet Cafe	
5.4	Mobile	
5.5	Educational Institute	
5.6	Other (Please Specify).....	

6. Did you search information through GIC website during the past 6 months?

6.1 Yes		6.2 No	
---------	--	--------	--

7. If yes, how many times? _____

8. Were you able to get the required information?

8.1 Yes		8.2 No	
---------	--	--------	--

9. If yes, what is your opinion on,

No.		Excellent	Good	Moderate	Poor	Very Poor
9.1	Accuracy					
9.2	Relevancy					
9.3	Availability of updated information					
9.4	Availability of web links					
9.5	Availability of additional information					
9.6	Facilities to download information					
9.7	Facilities to make online queries					
9.8	Availability of necessary forms					

10. What is your opinion on the following in relation to GIC web page and its links?

No.		Excellent	Good	Moderate	Poor	Very Poor
10.1	User friendliness					
10.2	Structural design and its context					
10.3	Services provided					

11. What is the alternative source of getting information related to the above query?

No.	Source	√	No.	Source	√
11.1	Newspaper		11.6	Internet	
11.2	Radio		11.7	Friends/Relations	
11.3	Television		11.8	Visit the Place	
11.4	Telephone Call		11.9	Other	
11.5	Telephone Directory			

12. What were the advantages of using GIC Website?

No.	Advantages	√
12.1	Facilitated collection of accurate information	
12.2	Facilitated collection and submission of required application forms	
12.3	Reduced number of visits	
12.4	Time saved / reduction in the number of days spent to obtain relevant information	
12.5	Cost saving	
12.6	Made day-to-day work easy (e.g. train schedules, etc.)	
12.7	Availability (24 hrs)	

13. Do you like to use GIC web link and facilities in the future?

13.1 Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	13.2 No	<input type="checkbox"/>
----------	--------------------------	---------	--------------------------

14. Do you like to recommend the GIC web link and facilities to others?

14.1 Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	14.2 No	<input type="checkbox"/>
----------	--------------------------	---------	--------------------------

15. Do you have any suggestions / comments to improve the services provided through GIC website?

.....

.....

Questionnaire for General Public
(Telephone Interview)

To be filed by the Enumerator

1. Name of the Respondent <i>(from the Directory)</i>				
2. Telephone Number <i>(from the Directory)</i>				
3. District				
4. Gender	4.1 Male		4.2 Female	
5. Date				

6. What are the sources that you mostly use to obtain information on Government services?

No	Source	√
6.1	Newspaper	
6.2	Radio	
6.3	Television	
6.4	Telephone Call	
6.5	Telephone Directory	
6.6	Internet	
6.7	Friends/Relatives	
6.8	Visit the Place	
6.9	Other (Please Specify)	

7. Are you aware of GIC (1919) and its services (If no, please discontinue and make the respondent aware of the GIC/1919)

7.1 Yes		7.2 No	
---------	--	--------	--

9. Have you used GIC Services before? (If no, please discontinue)

8.1 Yes		8.2 No	
---------	--	--------	--

9. Did you obtain GIC Services during the last month? (If no, please discontinue)

9.1 Yes		9.2 No	
---------	--	--------	--

If yes, Please continue with the "Caller Questionnaire"

13. On average, how many queries do you receive from GIC for a week? What is the average response time?

No.		Number of queries (per week)	Average response time (days and/or hours)
13.1	From 1919 (Template)		_____ Days _____ Hours
13.2	From Web (GIC Website)		_____ Days _____ Hours
13.3	As complaints and grievances		_____ Days _____ Hours

14. How many members of staff are being assigned to handle queries from GIC? _____

15. What was the effect on the following after linking with GIC?

No.		Response*
15.1	Public awareness on services	
15.2	No. of telephone queries received from public regarding the services	
15.3	No. of people who visit the organization to get information	
15.4	Time spent at your organization to get services by the public	
15.5	No. of applications rejected due to incompleteness	
15.6	No. of staff to assist general public in getting services	
15.7	Time spent to handle a single query	
15.8	No. of public complaints	

* Increased – 1; Remained Same – 2; Decreased – 3; Not Applicable - 4

16. What is your opinion on the following in relation to handling the GIC services?

No.		Opinion*	Reasons
16.1	Coordination and Support from the organization		
16.2	Available facilities; Information and Communication Technology facilities, etc.		
16.3	Available staff to handle GIC related activities		
16.4	Training received (GIC Related Services)		
16.5	Coordination & support from ICTA		
16.6	Coordination & support from GIC		

* Excellent – 1; Good – 2; Moderate – 3; Poor – 4; Very Poor - 5

17. What are the challenges you come across as the GIC Coordinator?

.....

18. Do you have any suggestions/comments for improvement of GIC?

.....

19. Special Notes:

.....

Questionnaire for Persons who are working as Call Agents in GIC
(Face to Face Interview)

1. What is your educational background?

1.1 GCE(O/L)		1.2 GCE(A/L)		1.3 Diploma		1.4 Graduate		1.5 Other	
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2. How long have you been working as a call agent?

2.1 Years		2.2 Months	
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3. How long have you been working as a call agent at GIC?

3.1 Years		3.2 Months	
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4. Have you undergone any job training / awareness creation programmes related to GIC operations?

4.1 Yes		4.2 No	
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5. If yes, what type of training/awareness creation programmes have you undergone and who were the training providers?

Training	Provider

6. On average how many queries/calls do you handle per day? _____

7. In what languages do you handle the GIC calls/queries?

7.1 Sinhala Only		7.5 Sinhala and English Only	
7.2 Tamil Only		7.6 Tamil and English Only	
7.3 English Only		7.7 Sinhala, Tamil and English	
7.4 Sinhala and Tamil Only			

8. What is your opinion on the following in relation to handling the GIC activities?

No.		Opinion*	Reasons
8.1	Working environment		
8.2	Available infrastructure		
8.3	Available facilities		
8.4	Available Knowledgebase/ Information		
8.5	Available staff to handle GIC related activities		
8.6	Training received		
8.7	Coordination & support from ICTA		
8.8	Support from Government GIC Coordinators		

* *Excellent – 1; Good – 2; Moderate – 3; Poor – 4; Very Poor - 5*

9. Are you interested in working at GIC?

9.1 Yes		9.2 No	
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10. Please give reasons,

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.....

11. In your opinion, how can the GIC Management and ICTA increase your work satisfaction?

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.....

12. Do you have any suggestions/comments to improve GIC and its services?

.....
.....

**Questions / Interview Guideline for Persons who are working as Quality Controllers /
Supervisors in GIC
(Face to Face Interview)**

GIC in General

1. What is your opinion on working environment at GIC?
2. What is your opinion on facilities available at GIC?
3. What is your opinion on technology used at GIC?
4. What is the present coverage of Government institutions and what are the plans to expand the coverage in future?

Call Agents

5. What are the skills and capacities of your call agents'?
6. What are the most required skills for call agents as you believe?
7. Have you or ICTA provided training to the call agents, if yes what sort of training?
8. What are the training needs of the call agents in the future?
9. What is your opinion on the attrition of call agents?
10. What are your suggestions to reduce the attrition / retain call agents?
11. What is your opinion on the supportiveness of your call agents? Were there any interruptive incidences of call agents? If yes, how did you overcome these incidences?

Coordination and Work Management

12. What is your coordination and work management procedure with ICTA?
13. What is your coordination and work management procedure with Government Institutes/Organizations?
14. What is the procedure used to handle complaints at GIC?
15. What is your opinion on coordination and work arrangement with your senior management?

Information

16. What is the procedure used in updating GIC information?
17. What are the methods used in updating information?
18. How often is information updated?
19. How do you validate information and what is the procedure of validation?

Issues, Opinions and Suggestions

20. What are the issues related to GIC at present?
21. What is your opinion on sustainability of GIC?
22. What is your opinion on the service quality/efficiency of GIC?
23. What are your suggestions/comments for improvement of GIC and its services?

Questions / Interview Guideline for ICTA Representatives
(Face to Face Interview)

GIC in General

1. What is the purpose of establishing the GIC?
2. What are the objectives, outputs and expected outcomes of GIC?
3. What are the facilities available, technology used and the capacities of GIC to operate it smoothly?
4. What is the present coverage of Government Institutions (Departments, Statuary Boards) and future plans to expand the coverage?

Coordination and Management

5. What is the policy level decision making mechanism used for GIC?
6. What is your coordination mechanism with the GIC?
7. What is your coordination mechanism with the Government Institutes?
8. What is the monitoring and evaluation mechanism used to monitor and evaluate GIC?
9. What is the procedure used to handle complaints at GIC?
10. How do you create awareness in general public and how do you make use of media in doing so?
11. What are the measures taken for capacity building of GIC staff?

Information

12. What is the information updating mechanism of the GIC website?
13. What are the methods used to update information and how often is the information updated?
14. What is the information validation procedure of GIC?

Benefits

15. What is your opinion on the benefits to the general public by linking information on Government Services with GIC?
16. What is your opinion on the benefits to the Government organizations by linking information on Government Services with GIC?

Issues, Opinions and Suggestions

17. What is your opinion on Government policies/procedures and guidelines to handle the GIC queries and provide information services effectively and efficiently?
18. What are the issues related to GIC at present?
19. What is your opinion on service quality/efficiency of GIC?
20. What is your opinion on sustainability of GIC?
21. What are your suggestions/comments for improvement of GIC and its services?

Questions / Interview Guideline for Heads of Government Institutes which are Linked with GIC
(Face to Face Interview)

GIC & Institution/Organization

1. How does your Institution/Organization coordinate and manage work/activities with GIC, ICTA and relevant Government Institutes/Organizations?
2. What are the types of services/information provided by your Institute/Organization through GIC?
3. What are the facilities, technology and capacities that your Institute/Organization possess to provide better services/information through GIC?
4. What is your opinion on supportiveness and commitment of your GIC coordinator/coordinators?
5. Are you satisfied with the services/information provided by your Institute / Organization through GIC?
6. What are your plans to improve the services/information provided by your Institute/Organization through GIC?

Information

7. What are the methods used to update information and how often is the information updated?
8. What is the information validation procedure used by your Institution/Organization?

Benefits to the General Public

9. What is your opinion on the benefits to the general public by linking information on your services with GIC?

Benefits to the Organization and Staff

10. What is your opinion on the benefits to the organization by linking information on your services with GIC?

Issues, Opinions and Suggestions

11. What is your opinion on Government policies/procedures and guidelines to handle the GIC queries and provide information services effectively and efficiently?
12. In providing services through GIC, what are the general issues faced by your Institute / Organization?
13. What is your opinion on service quality and efficiency of GIC?
14. What is your opinion on sustainability of GIC?
15. What are your suggestions/comments for improvement of GIC and its services?

Questions / Interview Guideline for Heads of Government Institutes which are Not Linked with GIC (Face to Face Interview)

Organization and Services

1. What are the types of services provided by your organization?
2. What are the reasons for not linking your Organization with GIC?
3. Do you have any plans to provide information to the general public on services provided by your organization through GIC? *Please explain*
4. Do you think that your Organization possesses the resources (*Human, Physical; Technology and Infrastructure and Financial*) to provide information through GIC? *Please explain*

Benefits to the General Public

5. What is your opinion on the benefits to the general public by linking information on your services with GIC?

Benefits to the Organization and Staff

6. What is your opinion on the benefits to the organization by linking information on your services with GIC?

Opinions and Suggestions

7. Are you satisfied with the services/information provided by other Government organizations through GIC?
8. What are your suggestions/comments for improvement of GIC and its services?