



CIAT's Knowledge Sharing Week

Results of a Participant Evaluation

Summary

In 2004, CIAT introduced a number of knowledge sharing (KS) tools and approaches into its annual meeting, in order to improve communication, relationships, and collaboration within the center. In this experiment, CIAT management was supported by the Knowledge Sharing Project of the CGIAR, which is one of 15 projects under the CGIAR's Information and Communication Technology – Knowledge Management (ICT-KM) Program.¹

The objectives of the Knowledge Sharing Week were specifically to: (a) develop a shared understanding and contribute to the operationalization of the center's 3 "Development Challenges" (DCs), (b) enhance integration of headquarters and regional staff and activities, (c) promote effective work planning, and (d) demonstrate the value of KS techniques. This brief report presents summary results of a participant evaluation.

Most participants were quite positive about KS Week and felt the meeting had improved communication and relationships and demonstrated the value of KS. Participants felt that less progress was made in operationalization of the DCs during the week, due in part to the complexity of the task and the lack of background information on the DCs. While it is difficult to assess the usefulness of specific KS tools, apart from the usefulness of the sessions in which they were used, most participants indicated that they found the peer assist, the knowledge fair and the open space approaches useful, and expressed interest in using them in the future. They expressed less interest in the on-line event planner and the meeting web site. Key suggestions (mentioned more than 3 times) offered by participants for improving future annual meetings at CIAT include:

- Balance the new and the old formula (i.e., combine exchange of scientific information with KS techniques)
- Define and identify better the topics, and give more background information beforehand
- Assure that everybody attends

Participants also felt that KS approaches should be incorporated into CIAT's projects. Special attention should be given to involving nationally recruited staff members more effectively in CIAT's KS activities.

¹ Web site links:

http://www.ciat.cgiar.org/cgiar/knowledge_sharing/home.htm (Knowledge Sharing Project)

<http://ictkm.cgiar.org/> (ICT-KM Program)

http://www.ciat.cgiar.org/ks_week/ (CIAT's Knowledge Sharing Week)

Introduction

CIAT, like most international centers affiliated with the CGIAR, has a long tradition of annual meetings in which managers and staff members meet for several days to discuss the year's activities and accomplishments, to exchange experiences, and to plan for future work. The format for these annual meetings has evolved somewhat over time in CGIAR centers, but it generally involves plenary sessions in which researchers deliver formal "PowerPoint" presentations, followed by questions and discussion. Time is also generally allotted for project teams and other small groups of researchers to review on-going activities and plan future work. In CIAT, as in other CGIAR centers, many researchers and managers feel that the time spent in annual meetings is not used as well as it could be. Too much time is spent in formal presentations, there is little in-depth discussion of "burning issues." There are few opportunities for people to get to know each other and establish the relationships that are essential for effective collaboration. Results of annual meetings are seldom documented, and follow-up is limited. In order to address these concerns, in 2004, CIAT management accepted the proposal from the KS project to support the redesign of the annual meeting and to introduce some knowledge sharing (KS) approaches to improve communication, stimulate dialogue, strengthen interpersonal relations and encourage the sharing of information and knowledge more broadly among staff members.

A team was established to work with CIAT's Director of Research to organize the meeting. As previous annual meetings had rather vague objectives, one of the first priorities was to define the meeting's objectives more sharply, with CIAT's senior management. The team then met with a range of others within CIAT – in face-to-face meetings at headquarters and via telephone conferences with the regional coordinators in Asia and Africa. These meetings were used to check the relevance of the meeting objectives with different groups and to get staff reactions to alternative meeting designs. Over three days, the objectives and plans for the meeting were progressively sharpened.

Objectives of CIAT's KS Week

As a result of this process of dialogue, it was decided that the meeting's general objective would be to improve communication, relationships, and collaboration within CIAT. Four specific objectives were also formulated:

- To develop a shared understanding of CIAT's 3 "Development Challenges" and contribute to their operationalization
- To enhance the integration of headquarters and regional staff and their activities
- To promote effective work planning by project teams and collaborators
- To demonstrate the value of KS techniques

Objective 1. Operationalizing the Development Challenges. In 2003, CIAT staff and management identified 3 broad themes –termed "Development Challenges" (DC) – which encompass the bulk of the center's research and development activities and provide a convenient framework for communicating CIAT's program to donors and other stakeholders. The center's current Medium-Term Plan had just been structured around the 3 DCs and presents logical frameworks for each of them. A number of questions remain as to how the DCs should be organized and managed to achieve CIAT's goals, and how projects, regional programs and other parts of the center should relate to them. Many other CGIAR centers are facing similar

challenges in developing coherent programs that bring together disparate projects and activities, often with distinct funding sources.

Objective 2. Enhancing headquarters – regional integration. CGIAR centers are rapidly decentralizing their activities (at date almost 50% of CIAT scientists are outposted staff), depending on project funding from diverse sources, and working with larger numbers of partners across the globe. As a result, they face increasing challenges in developing coherent programs and strategies that integrate the efforts of staff members at headquarters and numerous country and regional offices. For this reason, one of the important objectives of annual meetings (explicit or implicit) is to improve communication among staff members and to enhance the integration of activities and teams.

Objective 3. Promote effective work planning. Annual meetings at CGIAR centers generally provide time and space for project teams and other groups to plan work for the coming year. These opportunities are especially valuable for decentralized project teams and for out-posted researchers who need to work with colleagues and support units at headquarters.

Objective 4. Demonstrate the value of KS approaches. KS week was designed to give CIAT managers and staff members opportunities to experience the use of KS approaches first hand, so that they could gauge the potential value of these approaches for their own work and for future CIAT events.

Structure of KS Week

To achieve the objectives outlined above, the meeting was structured as follows.

Day 1

- An opening session to welcome staff to KS Week, introduce new staff members, provide an overview of the week, and allow the Director General to set the scene on the DCs (1 hour)
- Beginning of an “Open Space” workshop exercise to operationalize the DCs, including sessions for identifying and discussing issues and opportunities (5 hours)
- A concert followed by a dinner as social event.

Day 2

- Continuation of the Open Space workshop, including prioritizing topics and development of work plans (6 hours)
- A "Barometer Team" meeting for an After Action Review, including 8 of the meeting's participants. The purpose was to reflect on how things were going and to make suggestions for improving this meeting and future annual meetings at CIAT.

Day 3

- A meeting of the Professional Staff Association (1 hour)
- A Research Support and “Agronatura” Fair² (5 hours)
- Time for self-organized meetings in parallel with the Fair (5 hours)
- Question time with the Director General (1 hour)

On Day 3, a group of staff working on “Learning to Innovate” organized a day-long parallel workshop employing the “Appreciative Inquiry” approach to develop a vision and define the functions and form of the group.

² “Agronatura” is the name of a science park housed on CIAT’s campus.

Day 4

- Peer assists on topics related to regional-headquarters relations (3 hours)
- Session on “What’s new in the regions” (2 hours)
- Self-organized meetings (1 ½ hours)
- A "Barometer Team" meeting for an After Action Review

Day 5

- Time for self-organized meetings (all day)

Day 6

- Session on the ongoing process of Business Process Reengineering at CIAT (1 hour)
- Wrap-up session for KS Week, including participant reflection (building on recommendations for improvement from the Barometer Team) and an evaluation (1 ½ hours)
- Project leaders wrap-up session (1 hour)
- Self-organized meetings (4 hours)
- A "Barometer Team" meeting for an After Action Review
- A party as social event

On Day 6, CIAT’s Rural Innovation Institute organized a field trip that was attended by about 20 scientists – mainly out-posted staff members.

Evaluation Methodology

During KS Week, a “Barometer Team,” including 8 of the meeting’s participants met 3 times to reflect on how things were going and to make suggestions for improving this meeting and future annual meetings at CIAT. In the wrap-up sessions, the recommendations were shared by the Barometer Team, and participants had the opportunity to build on them. The recommendations are included as an Appendix to this report.

During the wrap-up session on the last day of KS Week, participants³ were asked to fill out a survey form to evaluate the event and provide suggestions for future annual meetings and for improving KS generally at CIAT. Forty participants completed the evaluation forms at this time. About 20 staff members (mainly out-posted) were not present, as they were on a field trip organized by the Rural Innovation Institute. During the week after KS Week, 7 other participants completed the evaluation survey form.

Various aspects of KS Week were rated by participants, using a 5-point scale. At the end of each section of the survey form, respondents were asked to provide comments or suggestions for the topics covered above. The remainder of this report is structured around the major topics covered in the participant evaluation:

- General reaction
- Extent to which the meeting’s objectives were achieved
- Strengths and weaknesses of KS Week
- Usefulness of different sessions and KS tools
- Usefulness of KS Week in relation to previous annual meetings
- Intended future uses of KS tools
- Quality of food and housing services (which is not detailed in this report)
- Suggestions for improving future annual meetings and KS generally

³ Participation during KS week varied from about 110 participants (Open Space session) to 40 (Wrap-up session).

General reaction

Participants' overall reaction to the design and implementation of CIAT's KS Week was quite positive. On a scale from 1 to 5, where 1 signifies "poor" and 5 "excellent," participants gave KS week an average rating of 3.7 (Figure 1). Three-quarters of those surveyed felt that KS Week was more useful for CIAT than previous annual meetings, and 40% felt that it was much more useful, both for CIAT as a whole and for them personally (Figure 2). Only 2 of the 47 persons surveyed felt that KS Week was less useful than previous annual meetings

Figure 1. General rating of KS Week (number of participants)

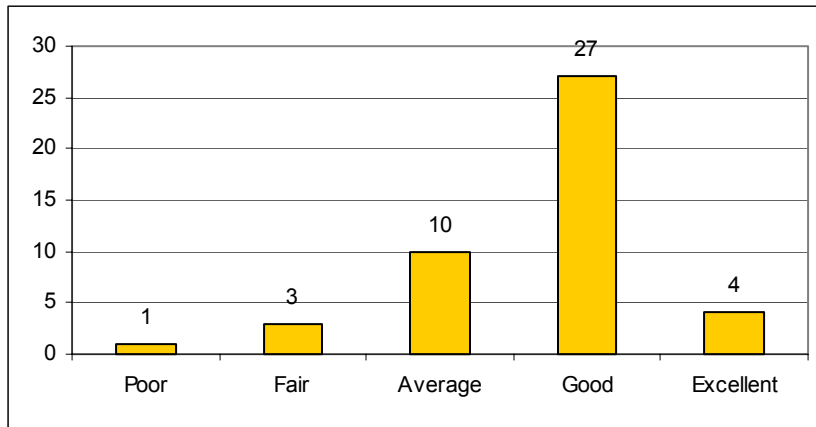
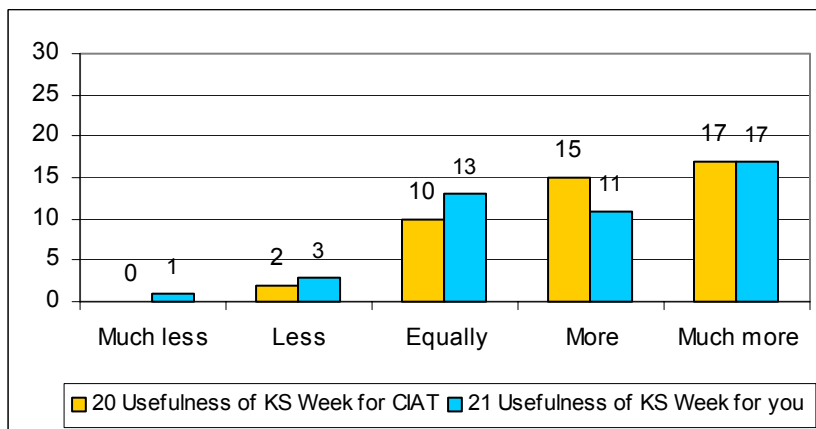


Figure 2. Overall usefulness of KS week (number of participants)



Achievement of objectives

Most participants felt that the objectives for KS Week had been largely achieved. They were particularly positive about the role of KS Week in improving communication, relationships and collaboration, fostering regional – headquarters integration, and demonstrating the value of KS techniques. Participants felt the week was less useful in promoting effective work planning and in developing a shared understanding of the DCs and contributing to their operationalization (Figures 3 and 4).

Figure 3. Achievement of the general meeting objective: Improving communication, relationships, and collaboration

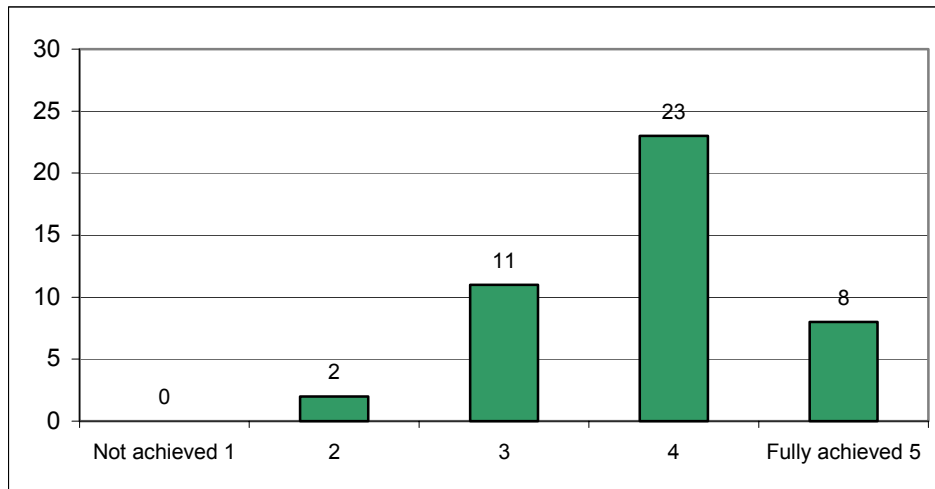
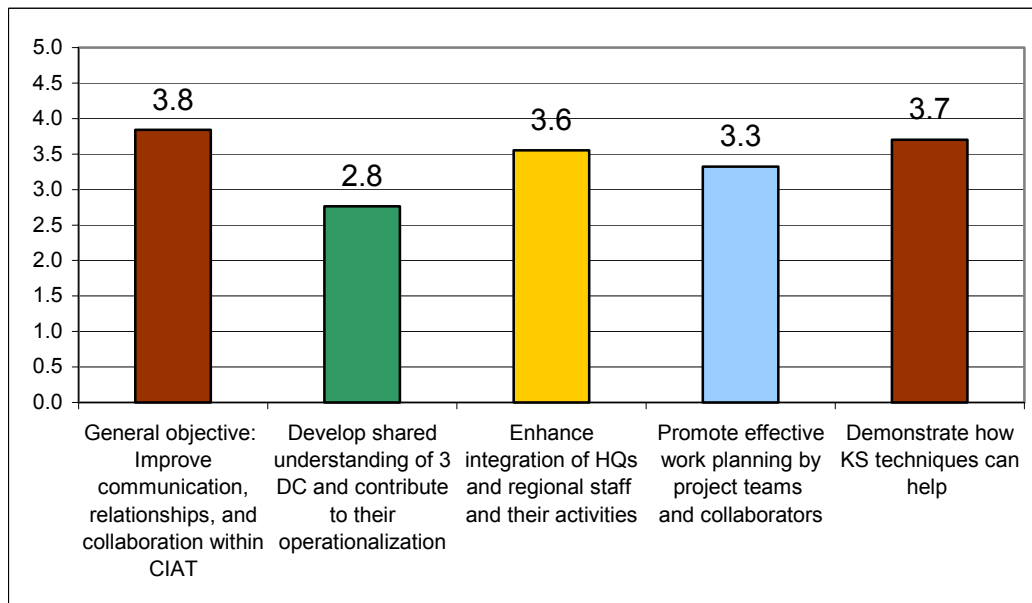


Figure 4. Achievement of specific objectives (average scores)



Most participants felt the use of KS approaches – including peer assists, a knowledge fair, and an open space workshop – stimulated communication, interactions among participants and involvement of out-posted staff members. Many felt that achievement of the week’s objectives could have been enhanced if staff had prepared more thoroughly on the Development Challenges prior to the event, if projects and regional programs had been included in the knowledge fair, and if fewer topics had been covered during the week, allowing more time for in-depth discussions. The following main suggestions were made for improving the achievement of objectives in future meetings:

- Clarify the objectives and explain them more clearly to participants
- Sharpen the Week’s focus on fewer objectives

- Provide more background information on key topics (such as the DCs) prior to the meeting

Main strengths and weaknesses

Participants identified four main positive features of KS Week:

- The openness, transparency and positive environment that prevailed throughout the week, which allowed people to get to know one another and encouraged them to speak their mind openly
- The quality of personal interactions, that helped build good working relations
- The fruitful exchange of ideas and interesting new ones that were generated
- The organization, management, and documentation of KS Week

The following limitations of KS Week were also identified:

- Variable knowledge of the DCs prior to the meeting⁴
- Lack of closure and concrete outcomes, particularly on how to move forward with the DCs
- Insufficient time and opportunity for in-depth discussion of scientific and programmatic issues
- Limited participation of nationally recruited staff members
- Too many parallel sessions that didn't allow participants to attend all the sessions they would have liked to (in particular the Research Support Fair)

Usefulness of different KS approaches and sessions

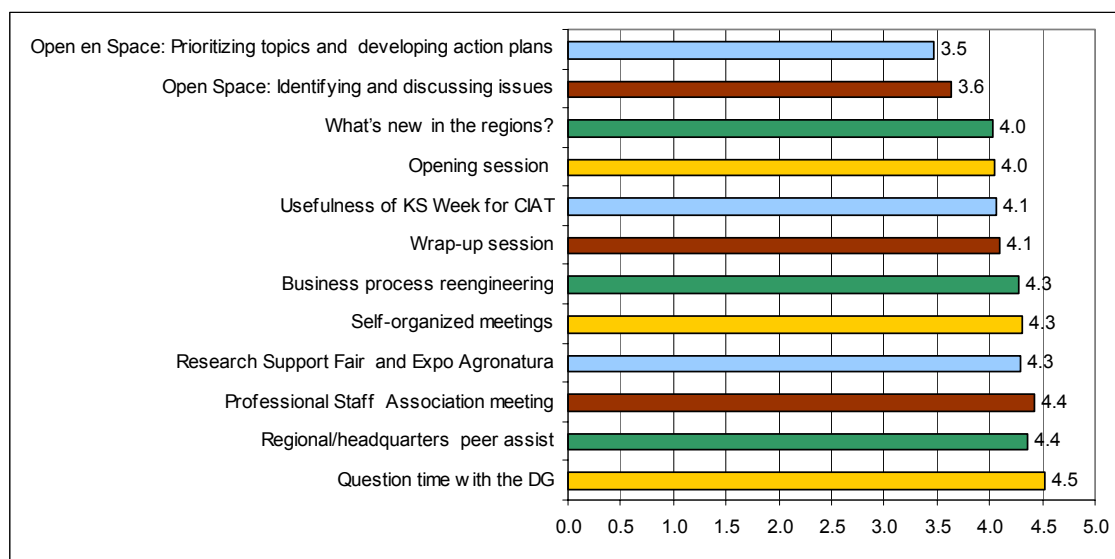
As different KS approaches and tools were used in different sessions dealing with different subjects and addressing different objectives, it is impossible to assess the usefulness of different KS approaches on their own, as distinct from the usefulness of the sessions. Another factor that complicates that assessment of the KS approaches and sessions is that different individuals used different tools and attended different sessions. Nearly all respondents attended the early sessions of KS Week that dealt with operationalization of the DCs using an Open Space format. Fewer attended the sessions later in the week that included the Professional Staff Association meeting, Question Time with the Director General, the Research Support and Expo Natura Fair, and the presentation on Business Process Reengineering. And fewer participants used the on-line meeting planner than the meeting website.

Participants' ratings of "usefulness for CIAT" and "usefulness for you individually" were very similar. Here we present only the results for usefulness for CIAT. Those who attended the sessions considered the following ones to be the most useful (Figure 5):

- Question time with the DG (a rating of 4.5 out of a possible 5.0)
- Regional-Headquarters peer assists (4.4)
- Professional Staff Association meeting (4.4)
- Research Support and Agronatura Fair (4.3)
- Session on Business process reengineering (4.3)
- Self organized meetings (4.3)

⁴ In general, headquarters-based managers and staff members have been much more involved in discussions

Figure 5. Usefulness of different sessions for CIAT (Average scores)



Another way to assess usefulness is to consider the proportion of all those surveyed who considered the session to be “very useful”. Here are the top-ranking sessions on this criteria (Annex figures):

- Self-organized meetings (38% of all those surveyed considered this to be “very useful for CIAT”)
- Research Support and Agro Natura Fair (34%)
- Regional-Headquarters Peer Assist (32%)
- Business process reengineering (32%)
- Wrap-up session (30%)

The session that participants considered to be least useful was the open space for operationalizing the DCs. The main critique was the lack of background information on this complex topic, and the lack of time for group discussions and synthesis of results. A suggestion for improvement of the knowledge fair was to broaden its scope and to include projects and regional programs.

Comparison of KS Week with previous CIAT Annual Meetings

When asked what aspects of KS Week they found more useful than previous meeting weeks, participants responded that the communication and interaction was more effective than in previous years, and they appreciated not being confined to closed dark rooms (most sessions were held in the “Arches”, a semi open area) and PowerPoint presentations. Participants highlighted the value of the open space methodology, the peer assist, the knowledge fair, the barometer team and the appreciative inquiry workshop (which was used in a special session for the “Learning to Innovate” group). It was noted that the outcomes of the regional-headquarters peer assist exercise were directly useful. The potential value of the open space approach was appreciated, but many felt that the topic chosen for the open space was not well defined and that group work should have been facilitated to better keep groups on track.

The main aspects of previous meetings that were considered to be more useful than KS Week were the exchange of scientific and technical information on work on progress, results and impacts. It was suggested that some mechanism should be found to facilitate the exchange of this

type of information, so that CIAT staff members would be brought up to date on CIAT’s work and results, but without returning to the previous format of non-stop presentations with limited discussion.

Future use of KS tools

When asked, which of a list of KS tools they would like to use, or see used, again in the future, more than two-thirds of participants said they would like to use the open space approach and knowledge fairs, and over half said they would like to use peer assists. In contrast, less than half expressed interest in using a meeting Web site or the on-line meeting planning tool (Table 1).

Table 1. Percent of respondents who indicate that they would like to use, or see used, the following list of KS tools

KS tool	Percent who responded positively
Open space	69%
Knowledge fair	69%
Peer assist	61%
Meeting web site	45%
On-line meeting planner	36%

Suggestions for future CIAT Annual Meetings

Participants provided a number of suggestions for improving future annual meetings. One of the most frequent suggestions was to “balance the old and the new formula.” The recommendation was to continue introducing KS approaches (which stimulate much more communication and discussion) and also present research-related information as entry points for discussion.

Define and identify better the topics, and give more previous information about them.

A second suggestion was to sharpen the week’s topics and work toward more sharply defined outcomes.

A third suggestion was to assure that everybody attends the sessions, from Outposted and Headquarter staff including more participation from support services and national staff.

A final common suggestion was to continue with the “knowledge fair” approach, broadening it to include CIAT’s research projects and regional programs.

Suggestions for improving KS at CIAT

It was suggested to explore more opportunities for projects to share knowledge, and to introduce KS at project level.

A second major priority identified for improving KS at CIAT was to seek ways to involve national recruited staff members much more broadly as well as partners, donors, support staff. Whereas attempts were made to involve Colombian staff members in KS Week (project leaders had been invited several times to invite 2 or 3 national staff), the results were very limited: only three projects had followed the suggestion. The reasons for this should be explored and more effective means sought to involve national staff members in the future.



Annexes

Annex 1

Participant Evaluation Results

Annex 2

Participant Evaluation Form

Annex 3

Participant Evaluation: Responses to the open-ended questions

Annex 4

Barometer Team Recommendations



**CIAT's Knowledge
Sharing Week**

Dynamic Communication for Change

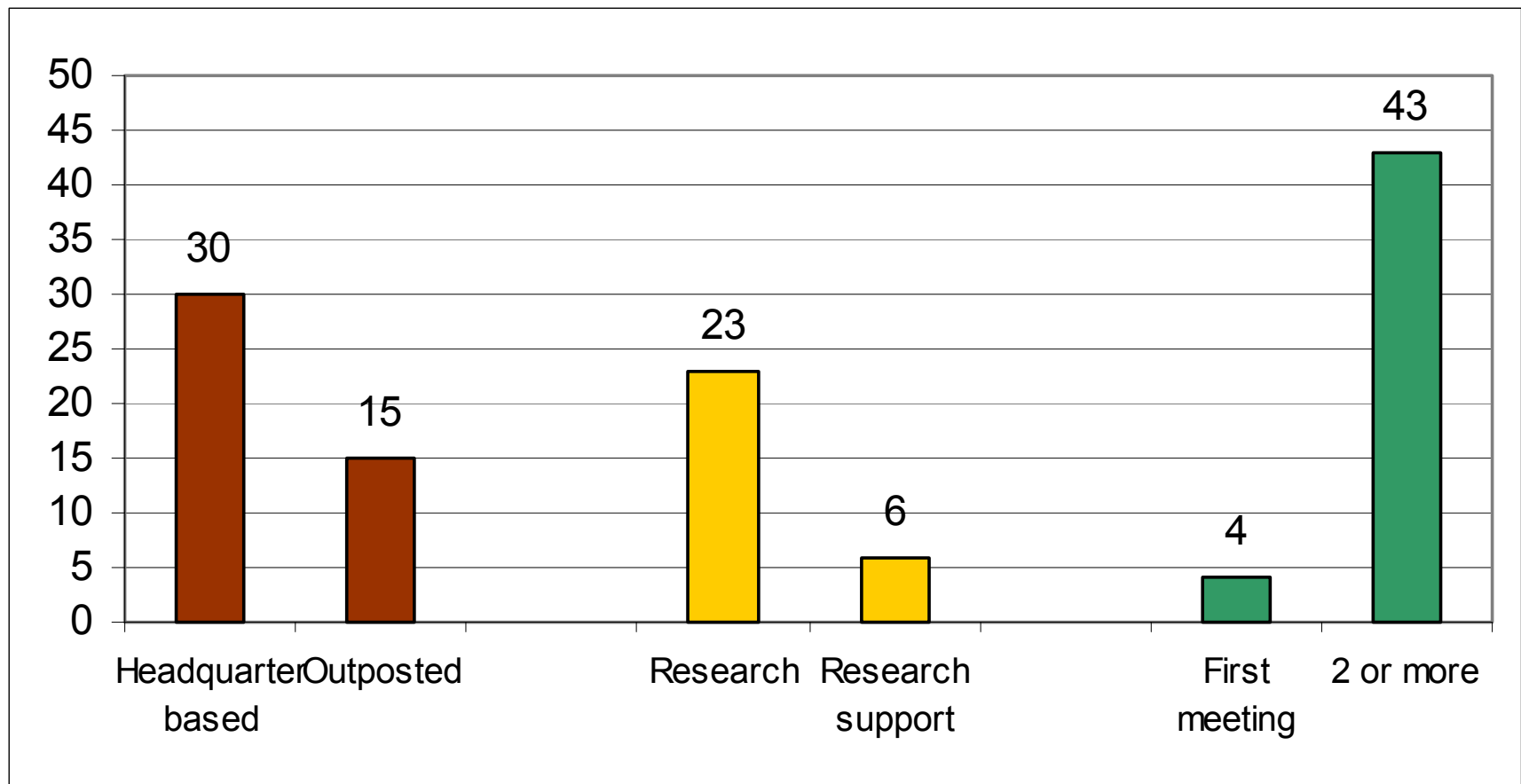
Cali, Colombia, 29 November - 4 December 2004

Annex 1

Participant Evaluation Results

Participant Evaluation Results

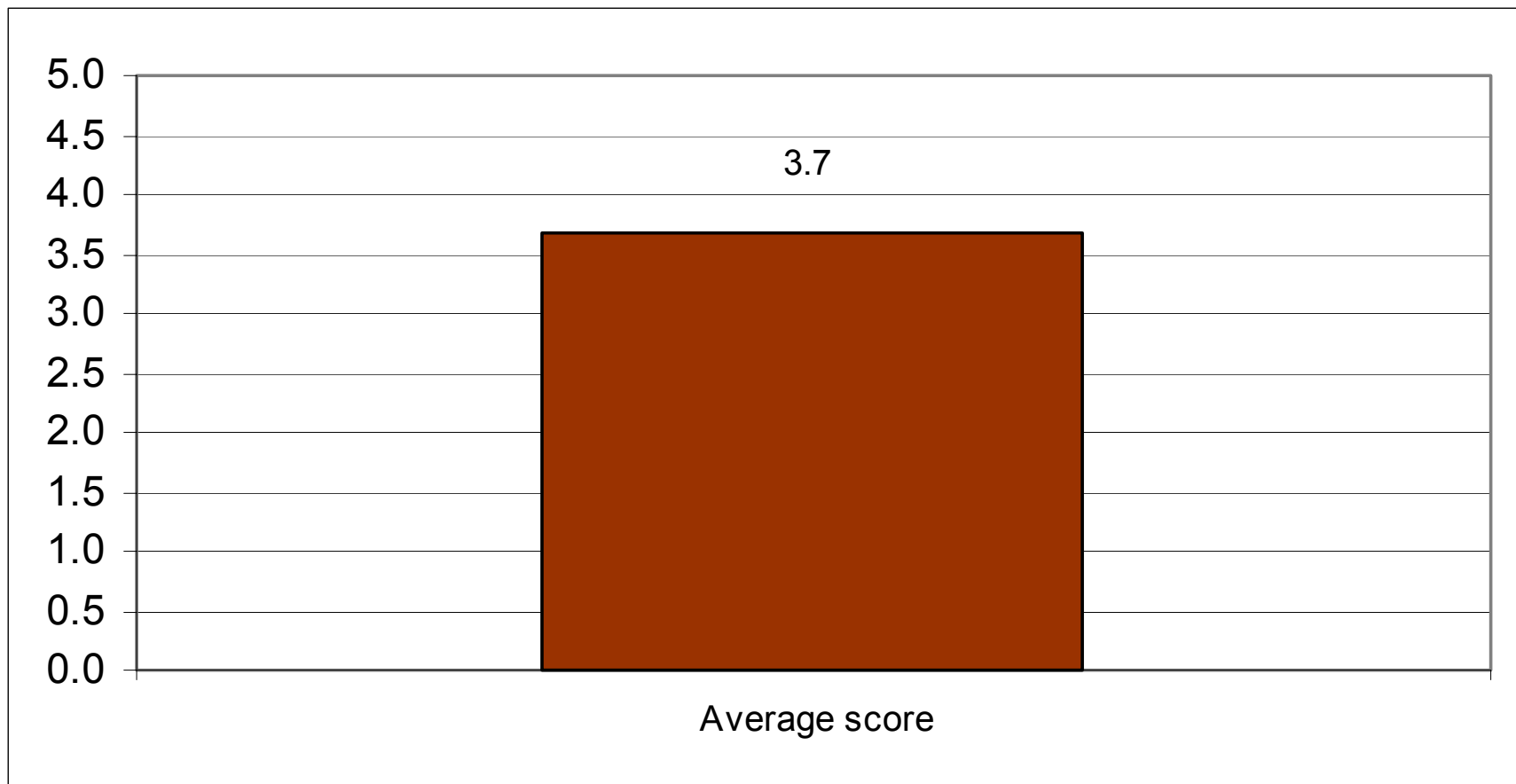
About yourself



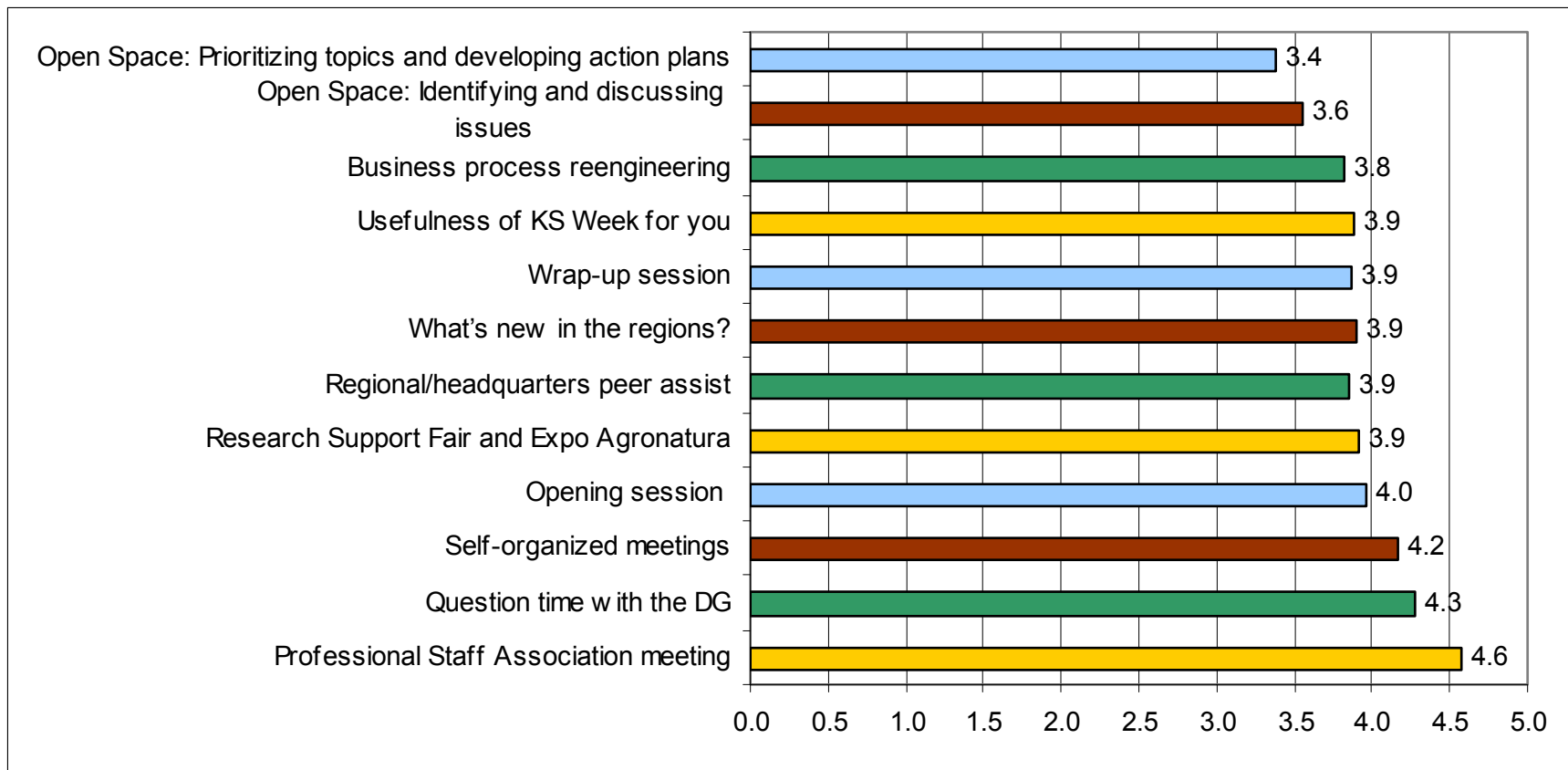


Participant Evaluation Results

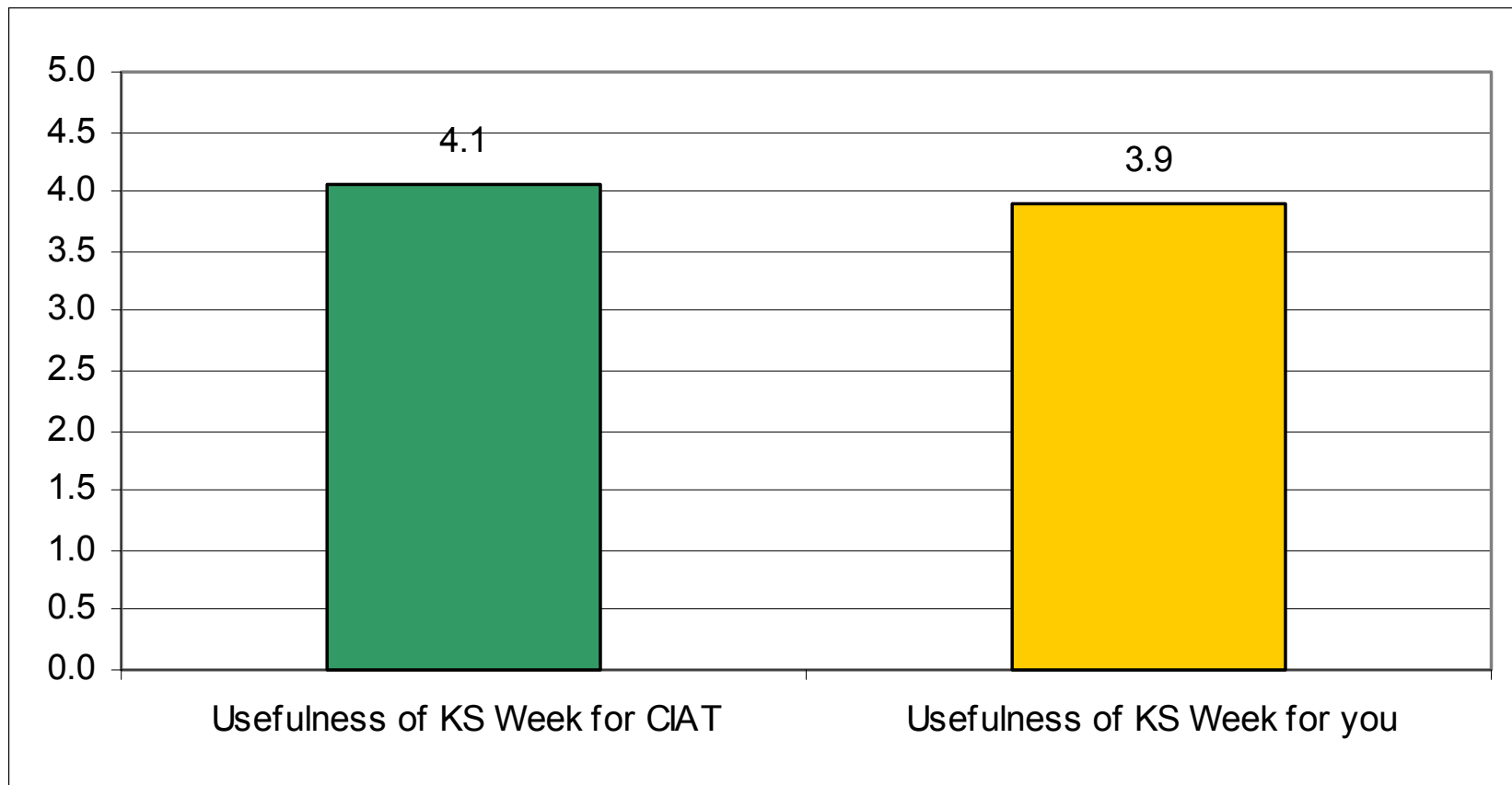
1. Please rate KS Week



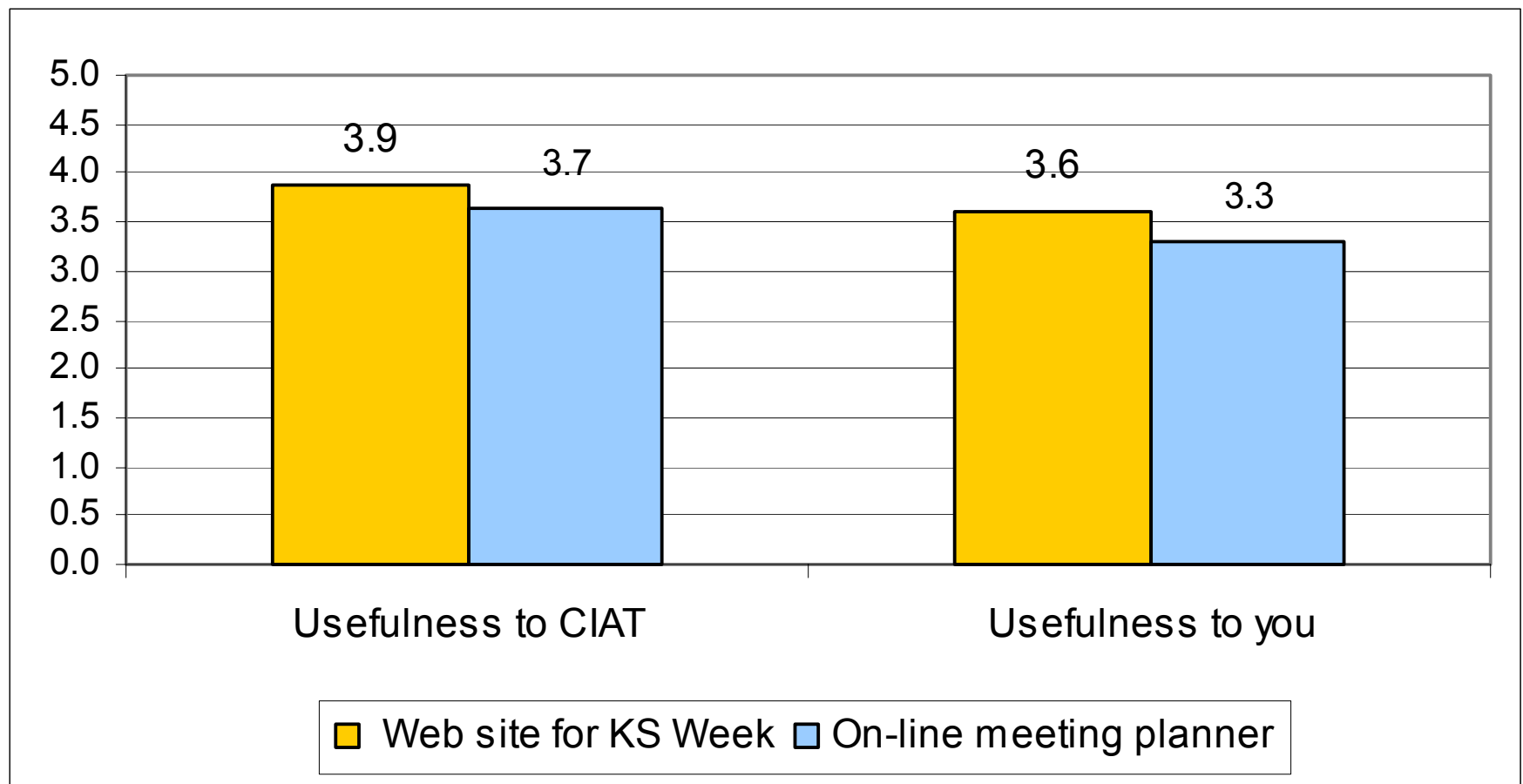
4. Usefulness of different sessions for *you* / **Average score**



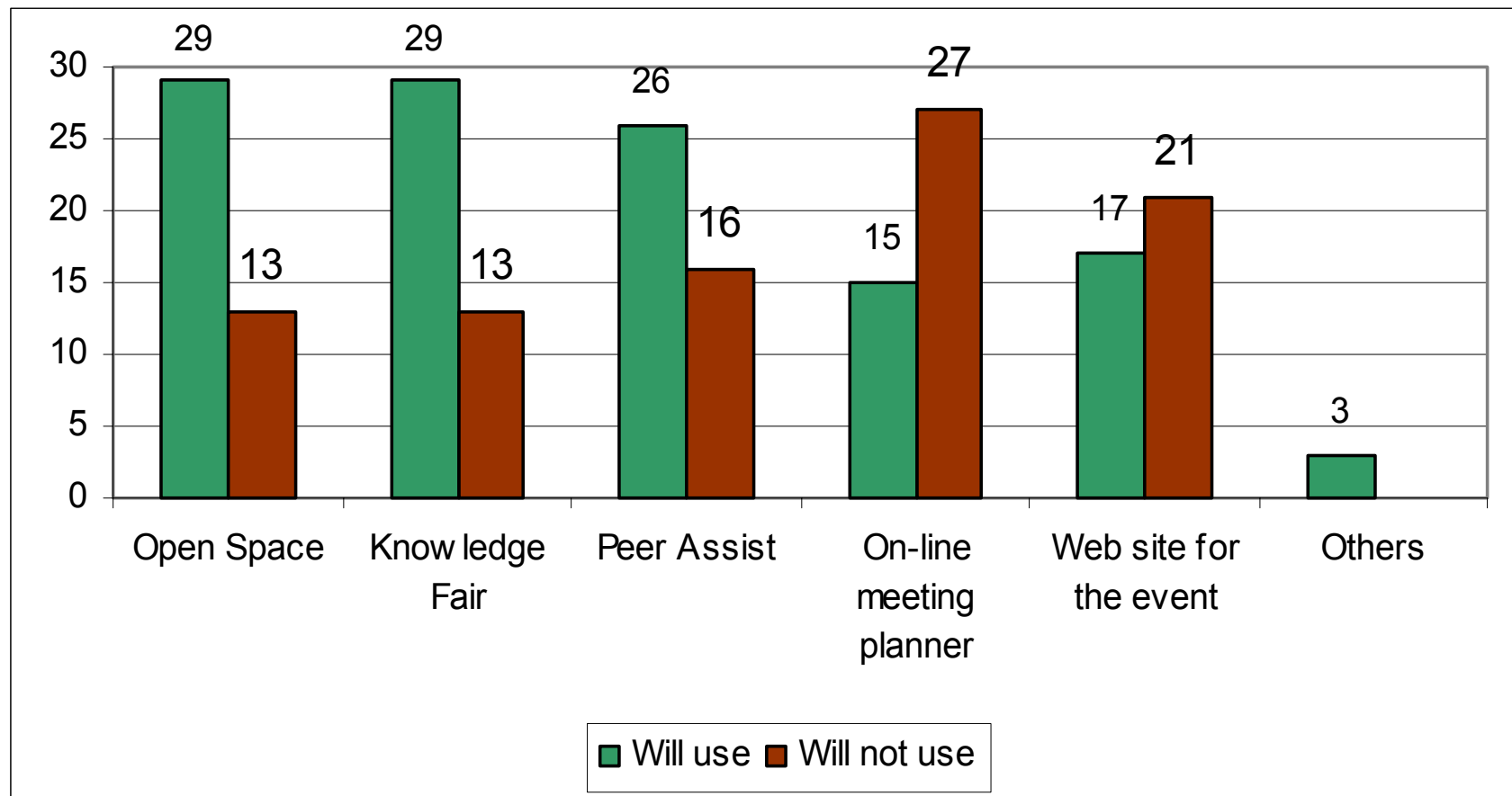
5. Usefulness of KS week / Average score



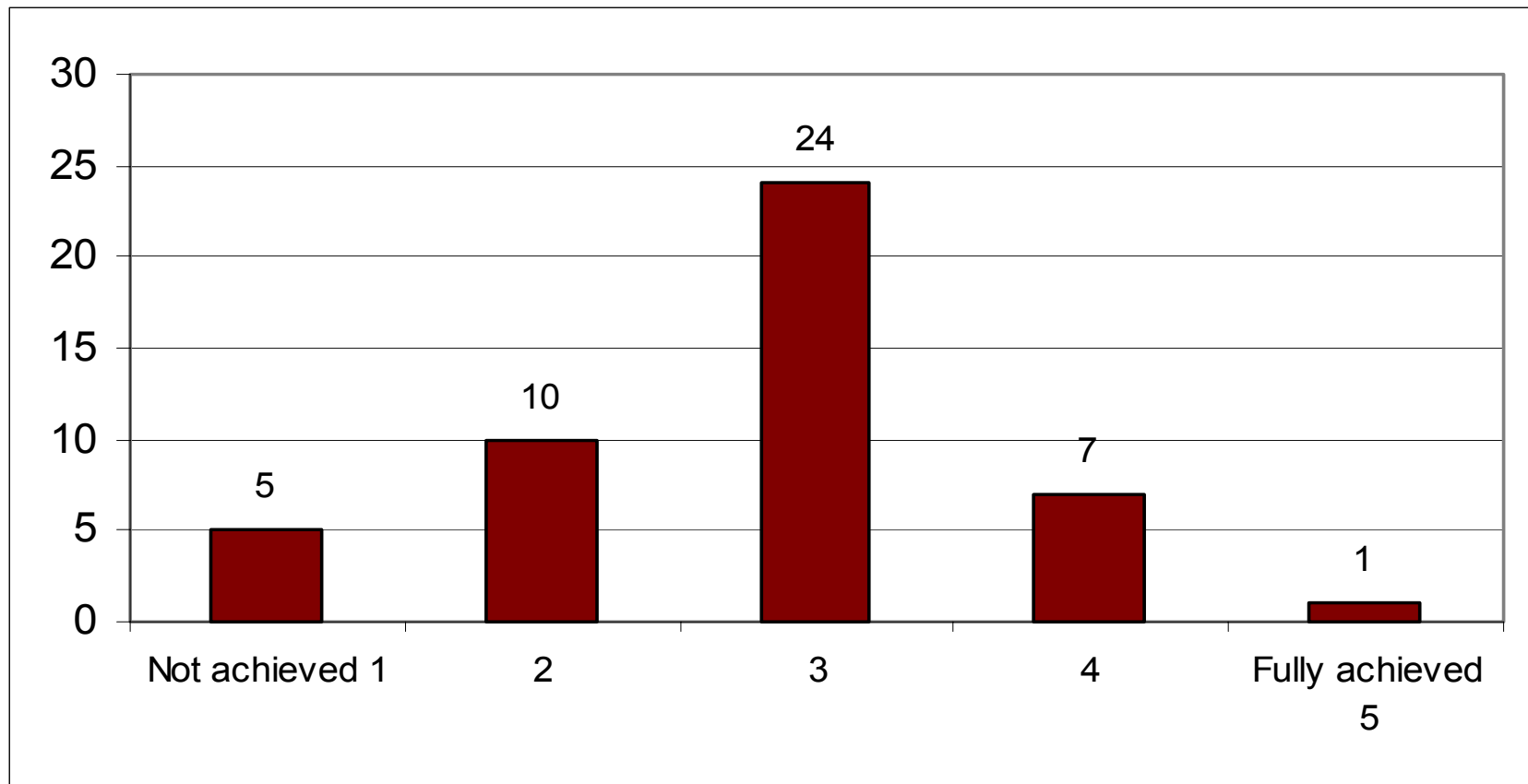
6. Usefulness of KS tools / Average score



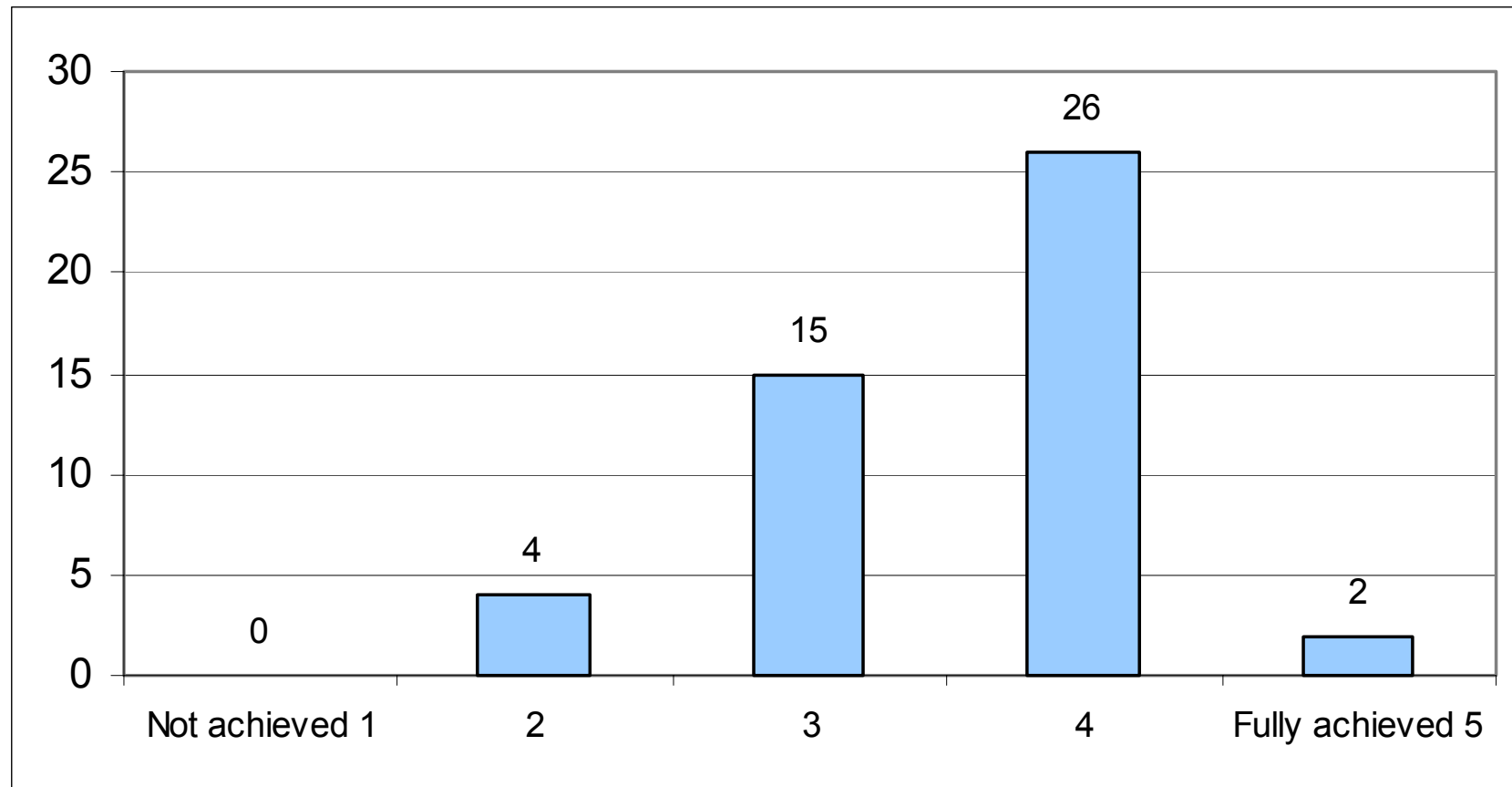
7. Future use of KS tools



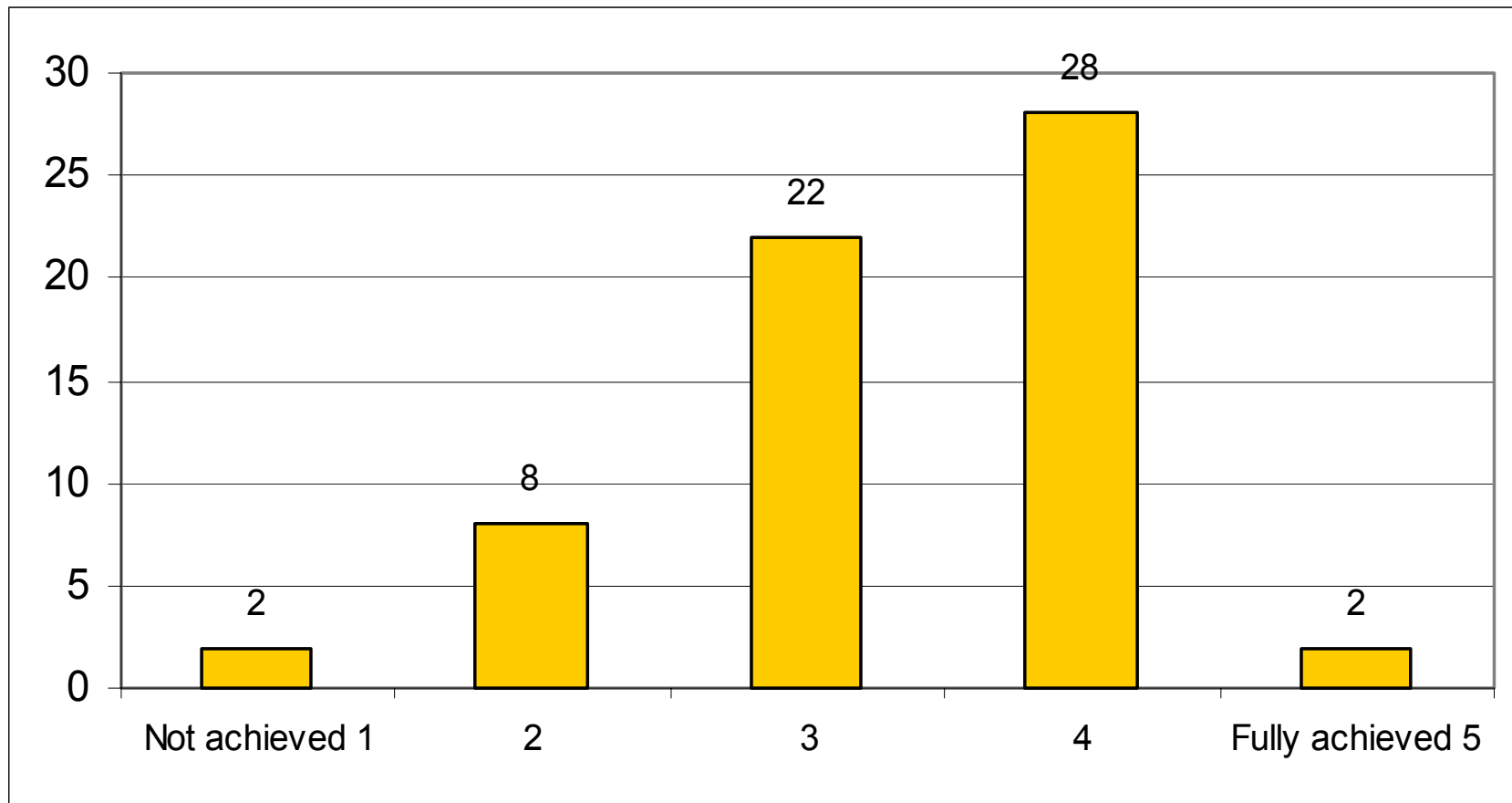
3. Develop a shared understanding of the 3 DC and contribute to their operationalization



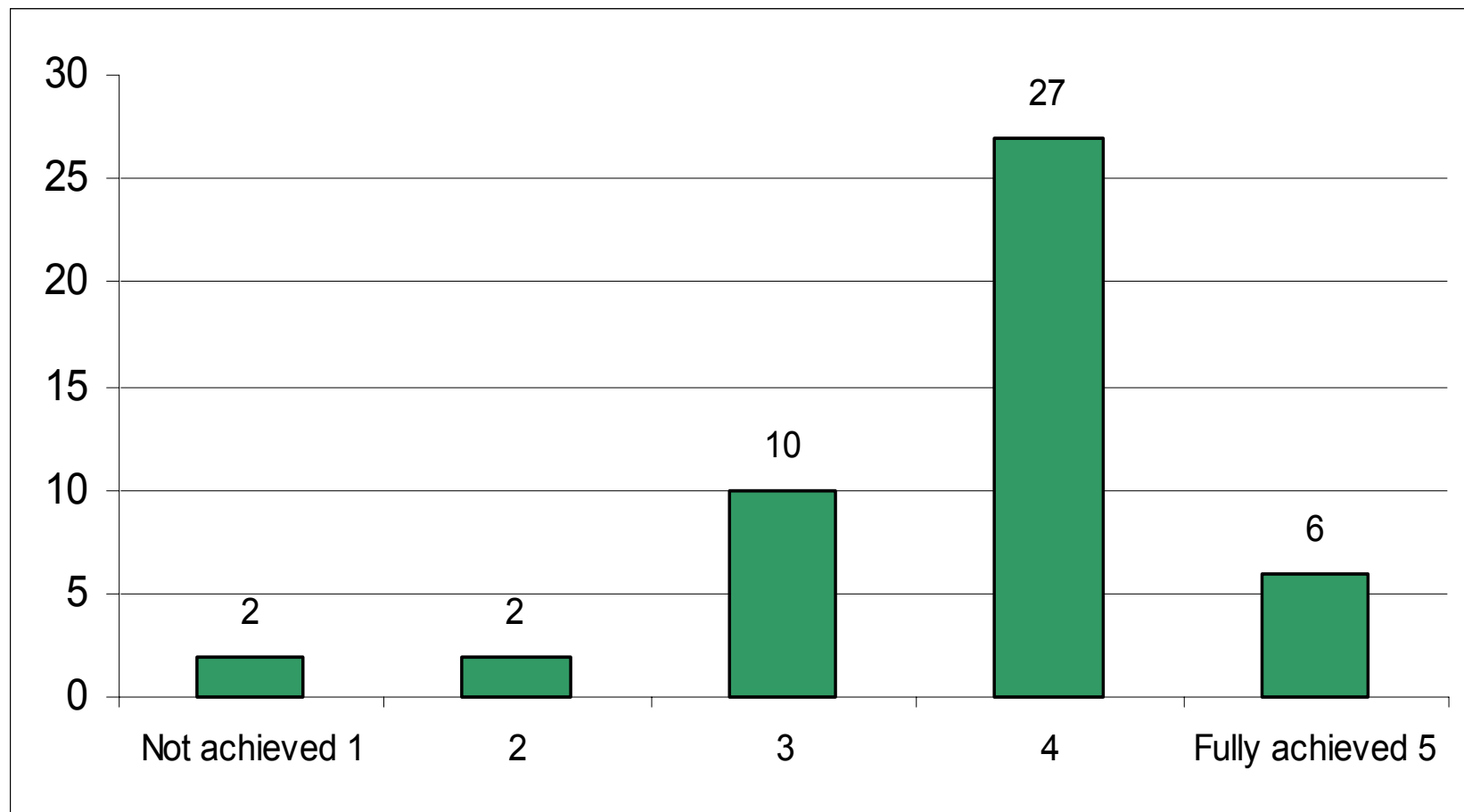
4. Enhance the integration of HQs and regional staff and their activities



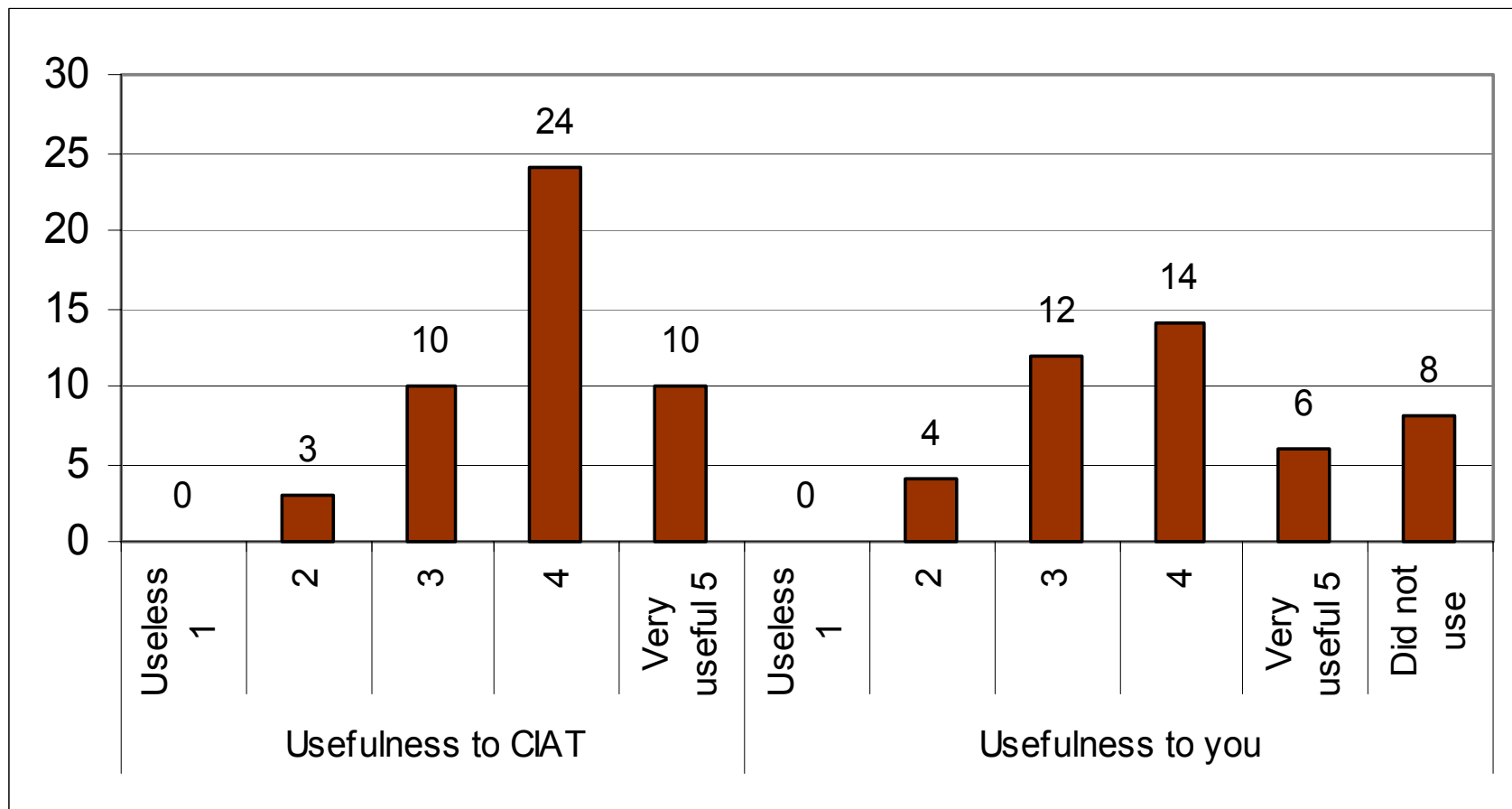
5. Promote effective work planning by project teams and collaborators



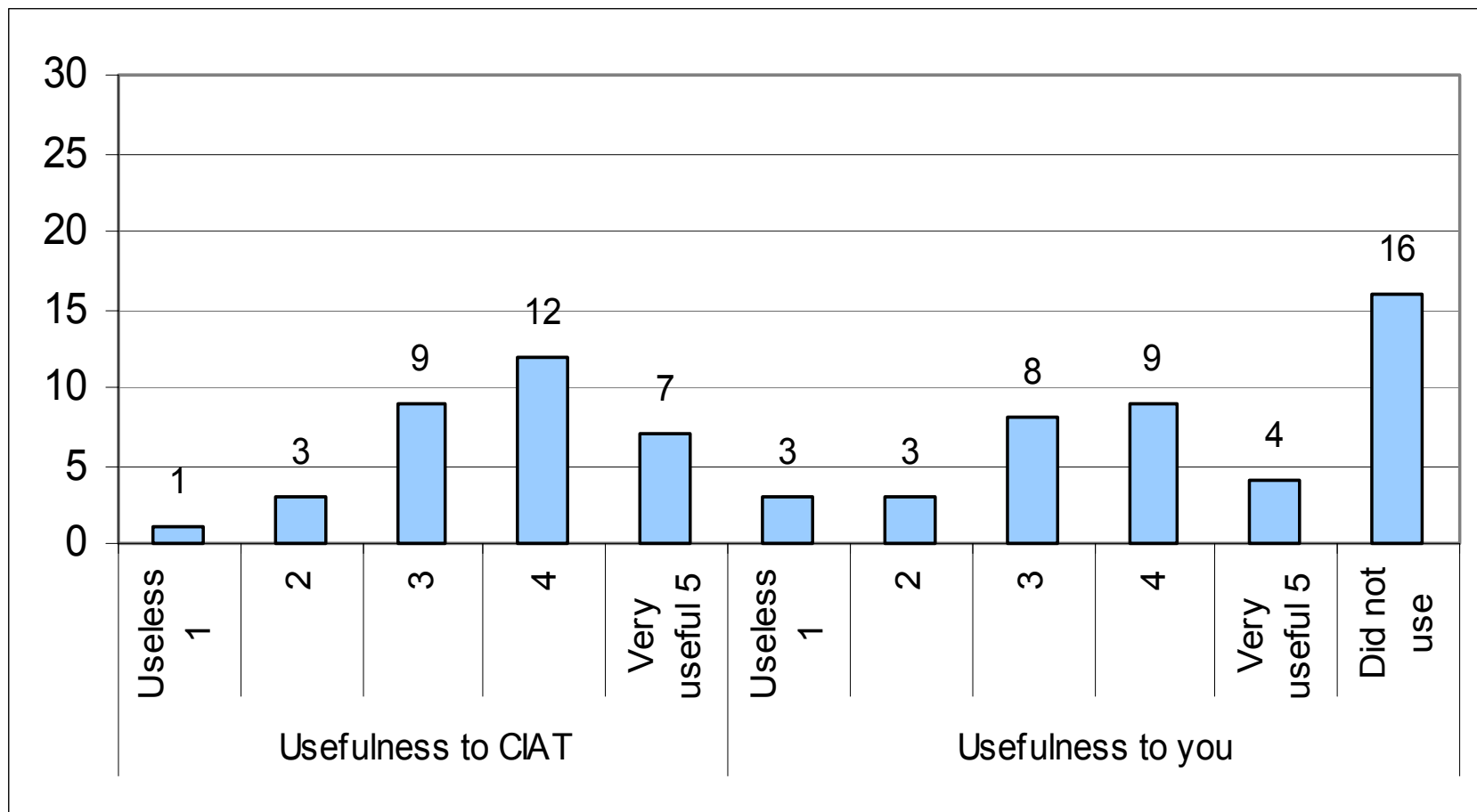
6. Demonstrate how KS techniques can help



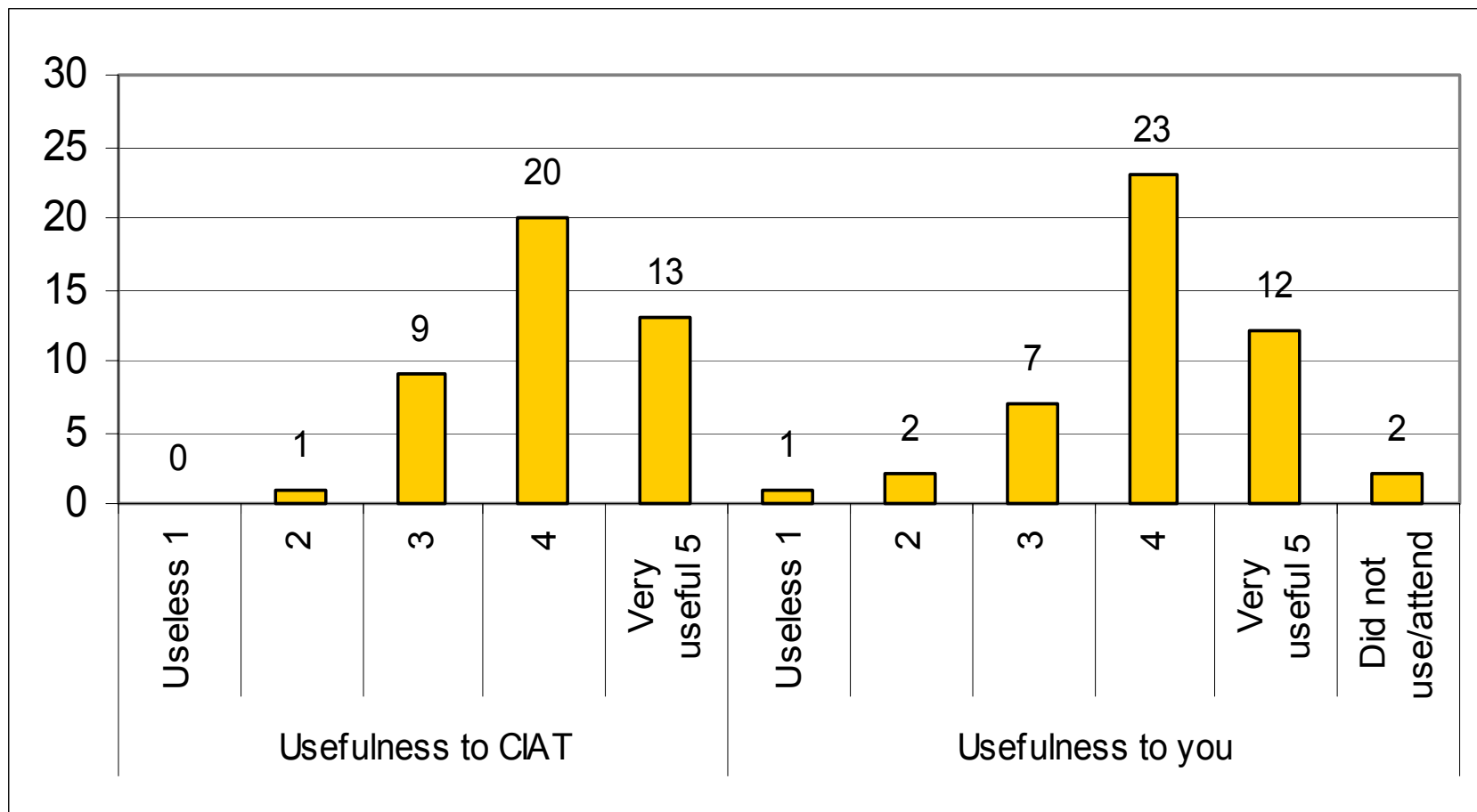
7. Web site for KS Week



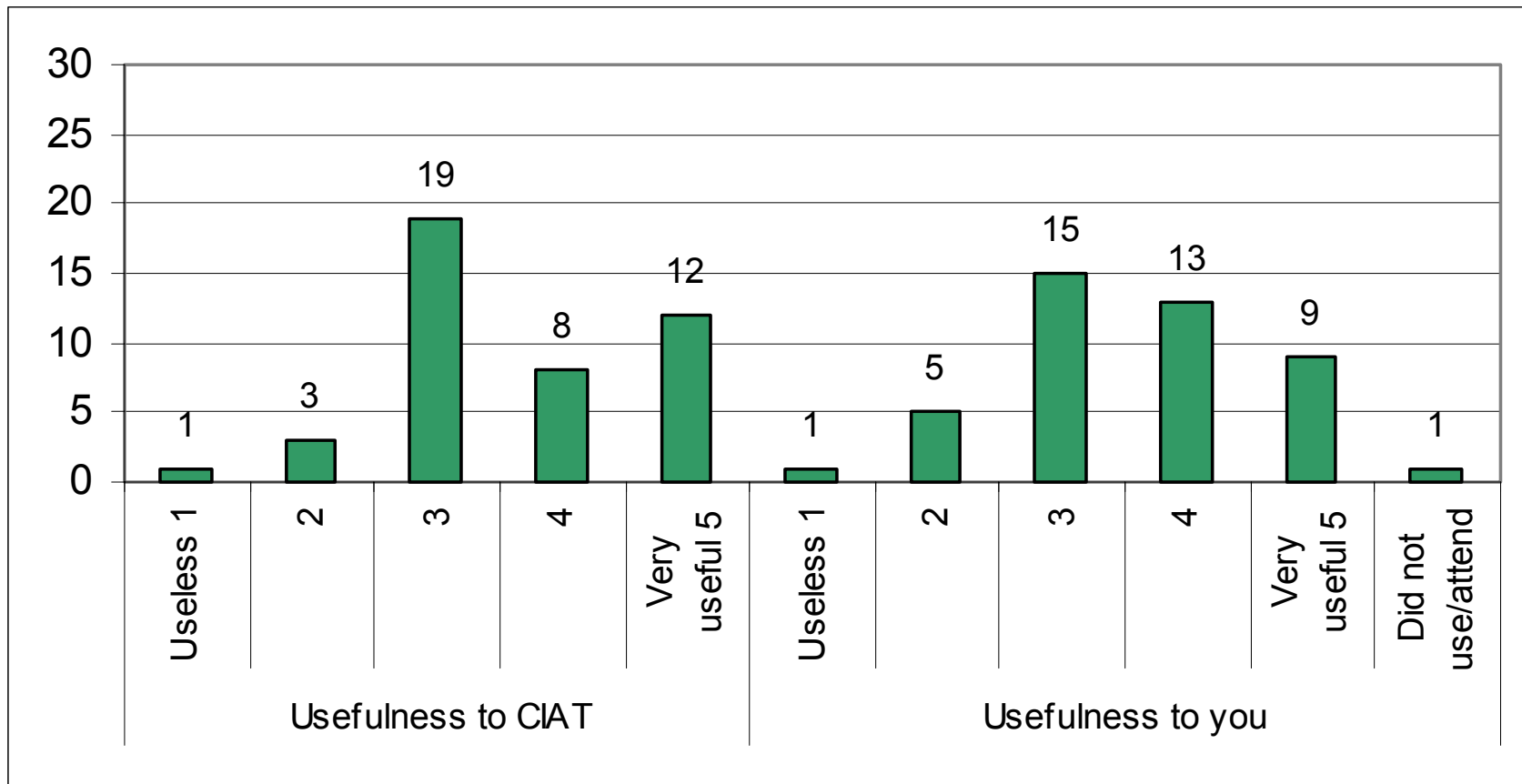
8. On-line meeting planner



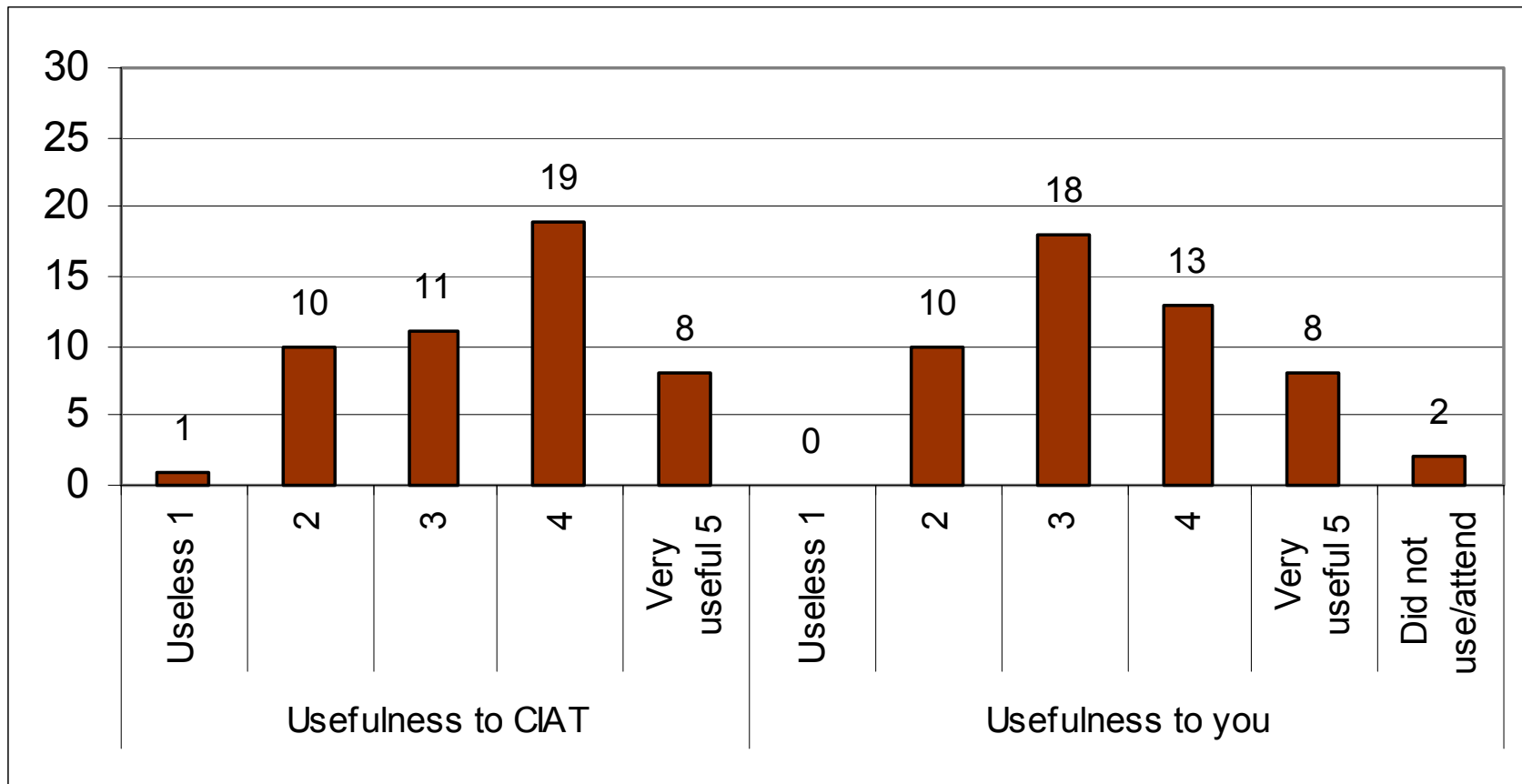
9. Opening session



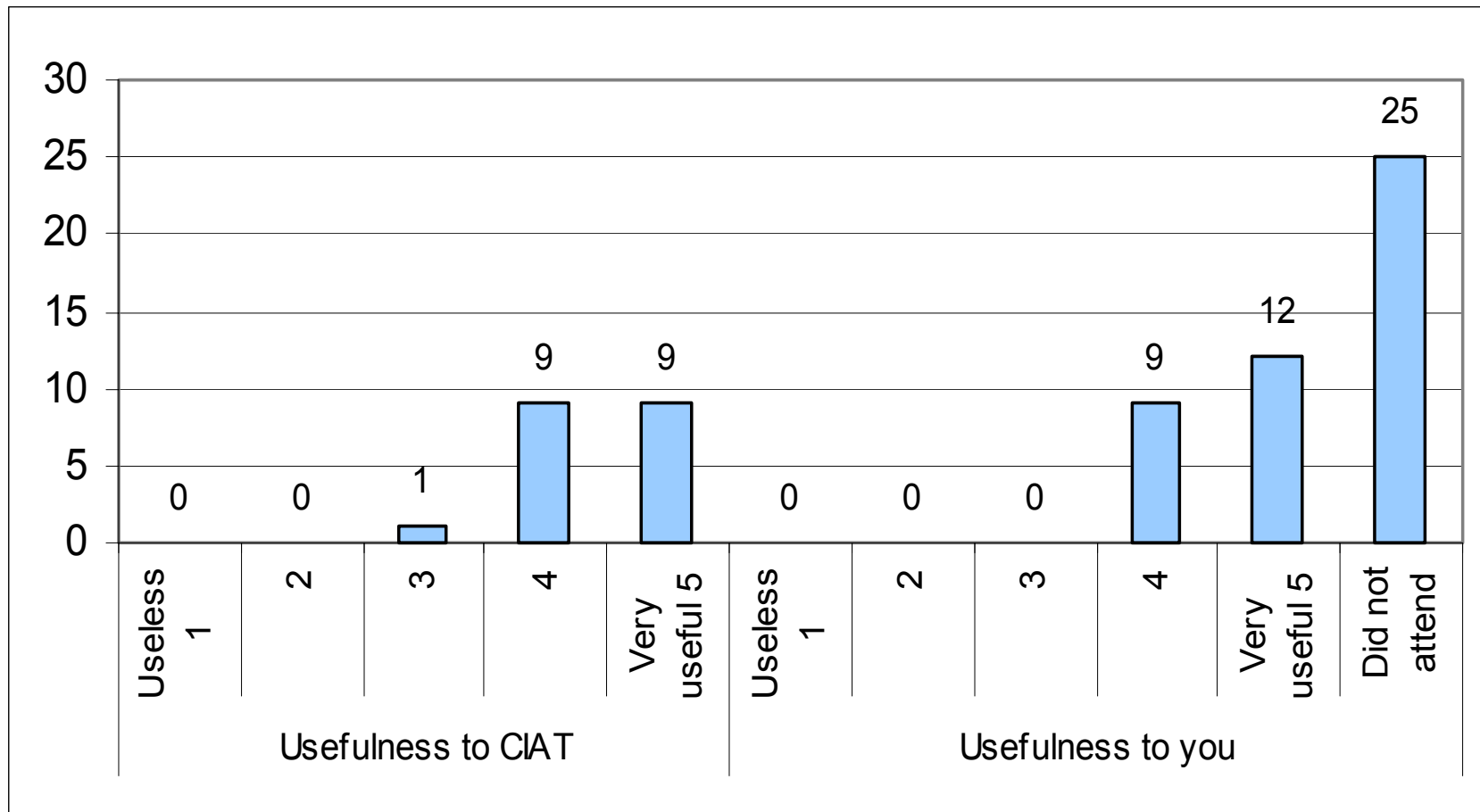
10. Open Space Workshop: Operationalizing the DCs Challenges – Identifying and discussing issues



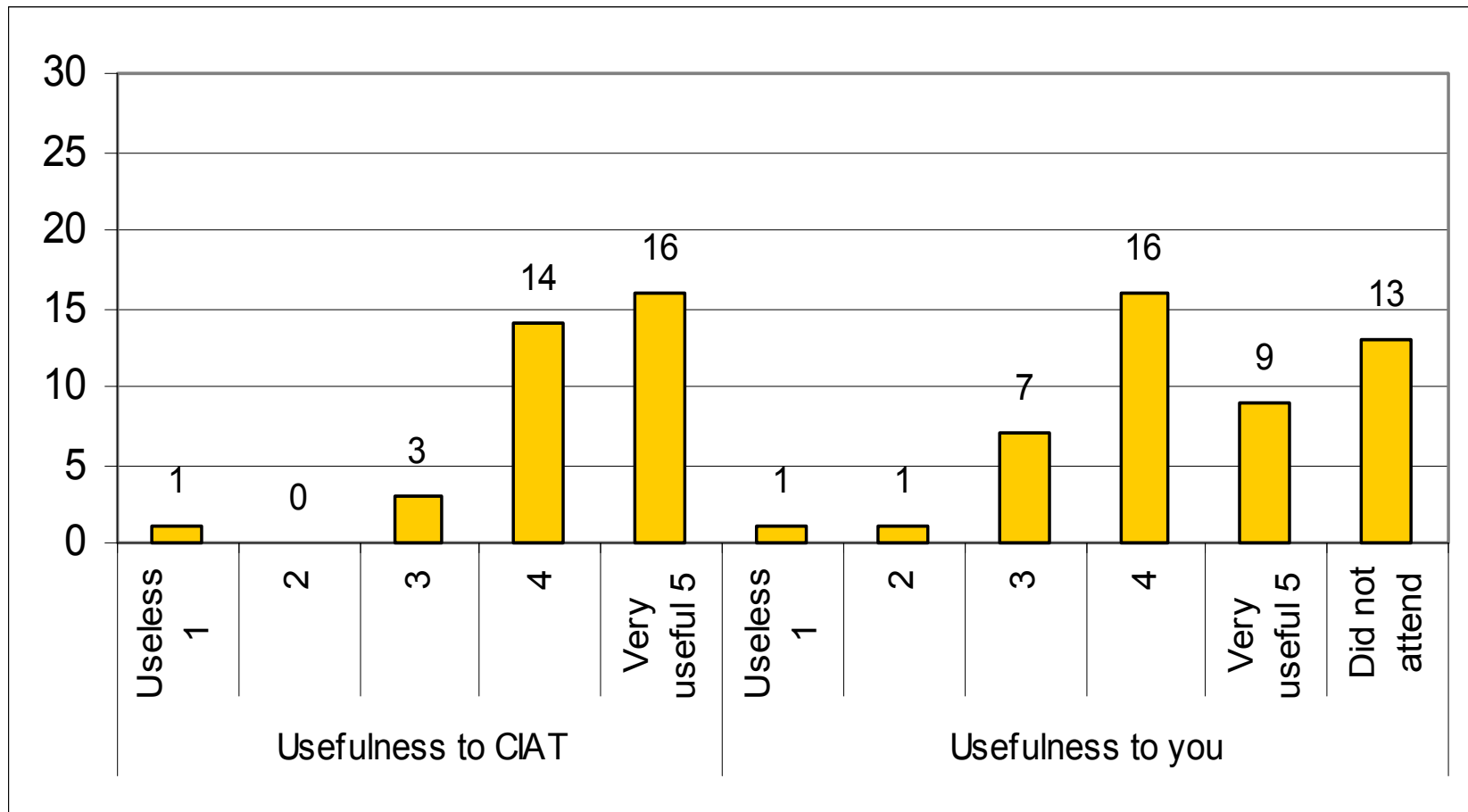
11. Open en Space Workshop: Prioritizing topics and developing action plans



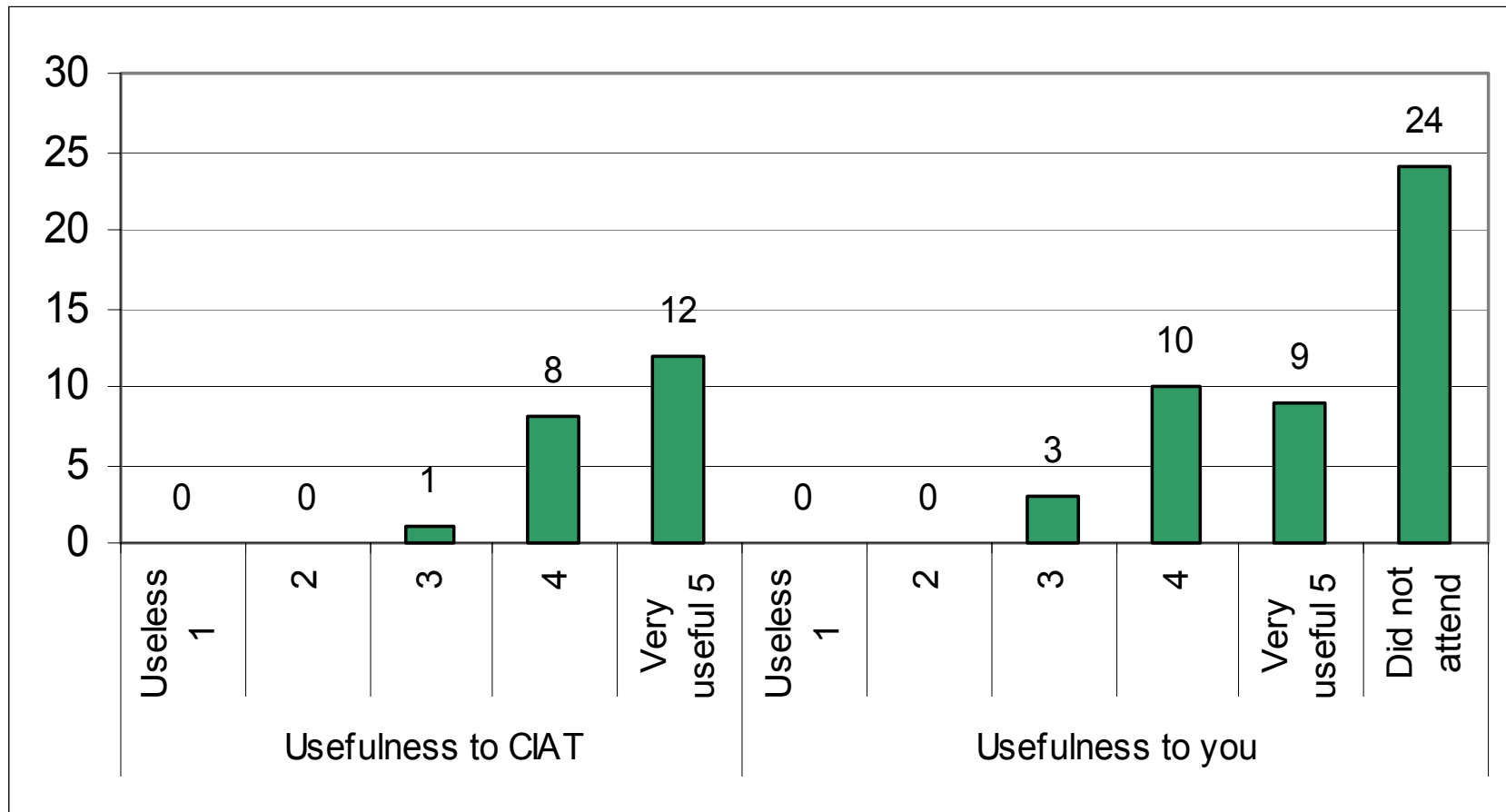
12. Professional Staff Association meeting



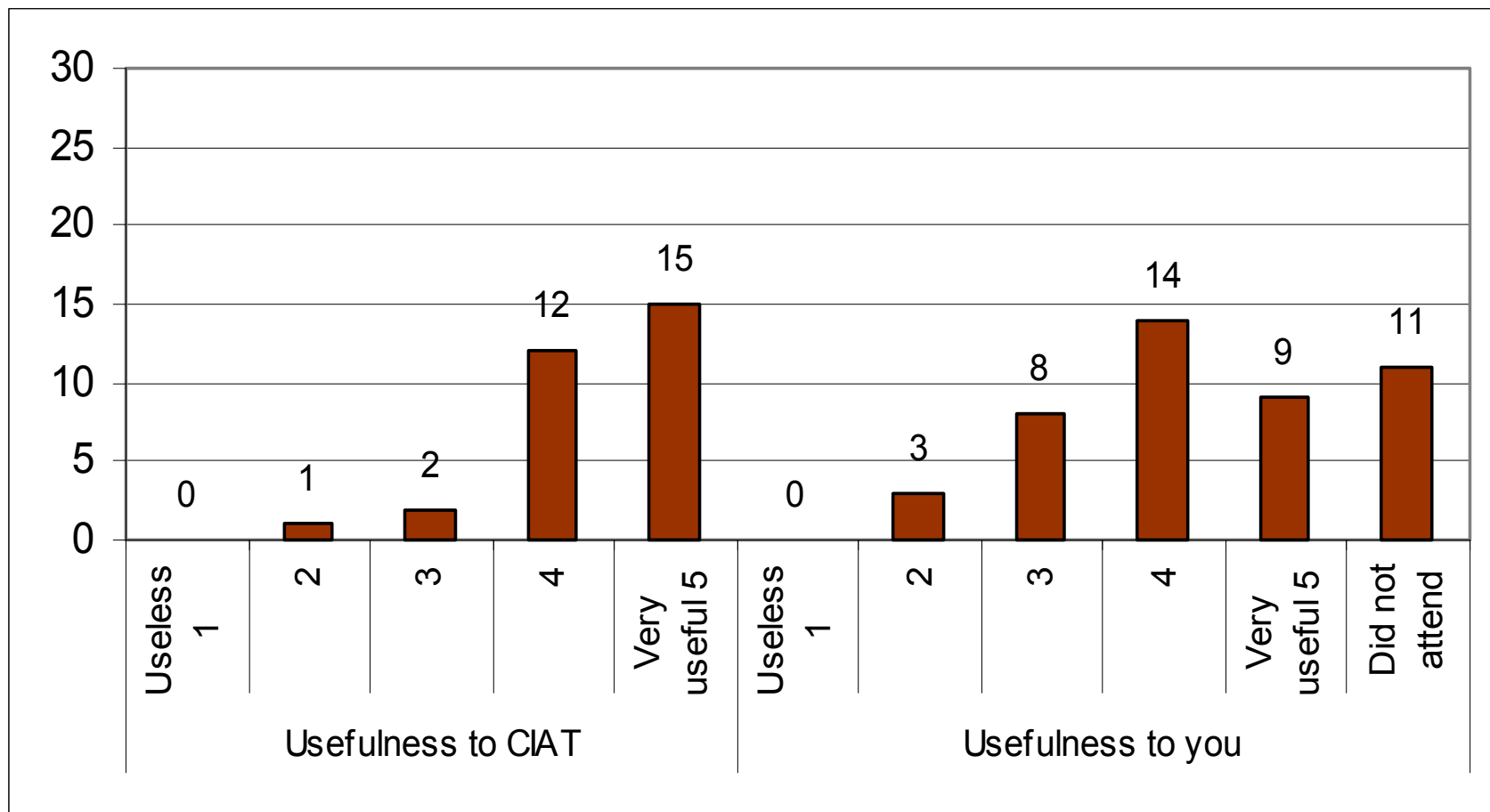
13. Research Support Fair and Expo Agronatura



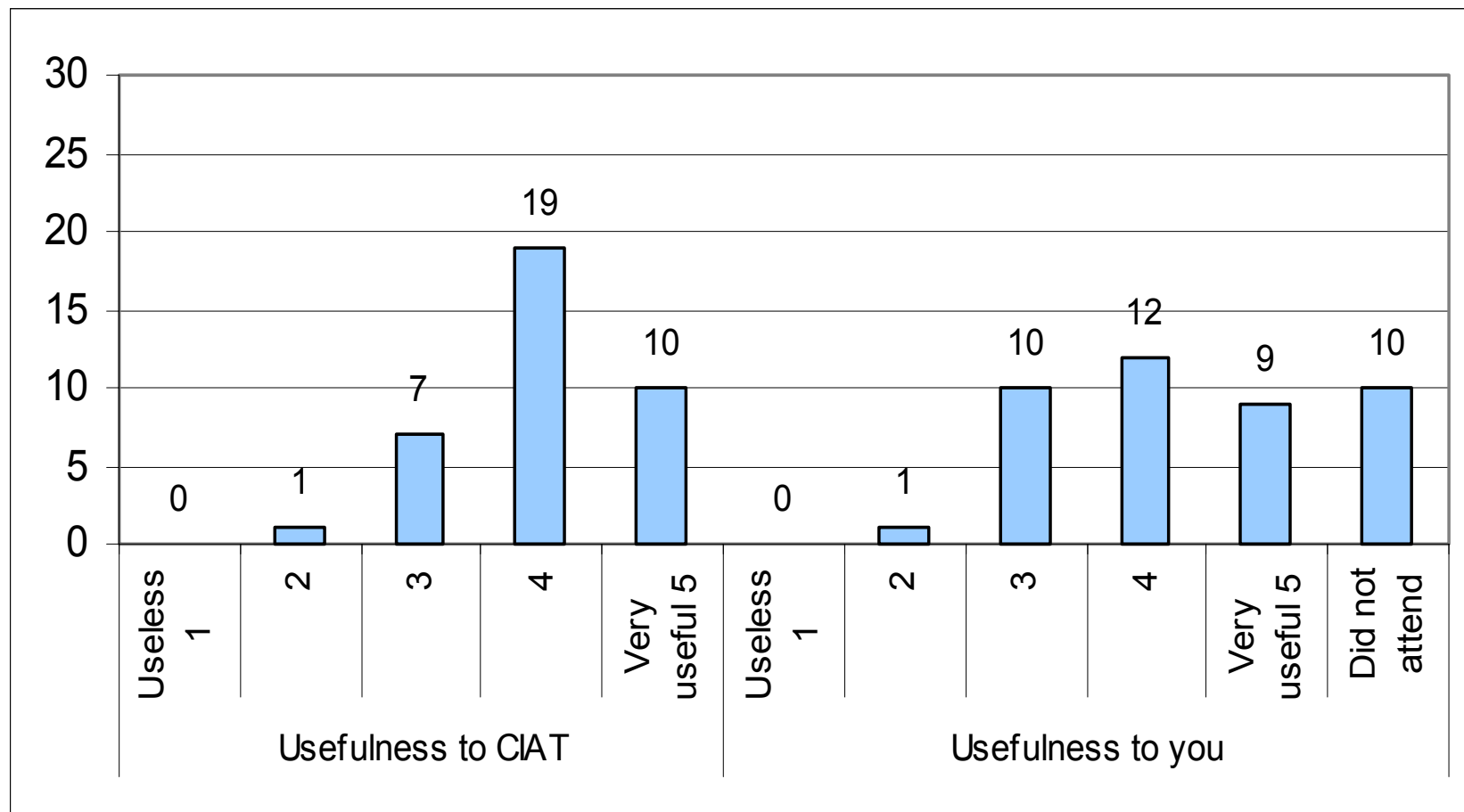
14. Question time with the DG



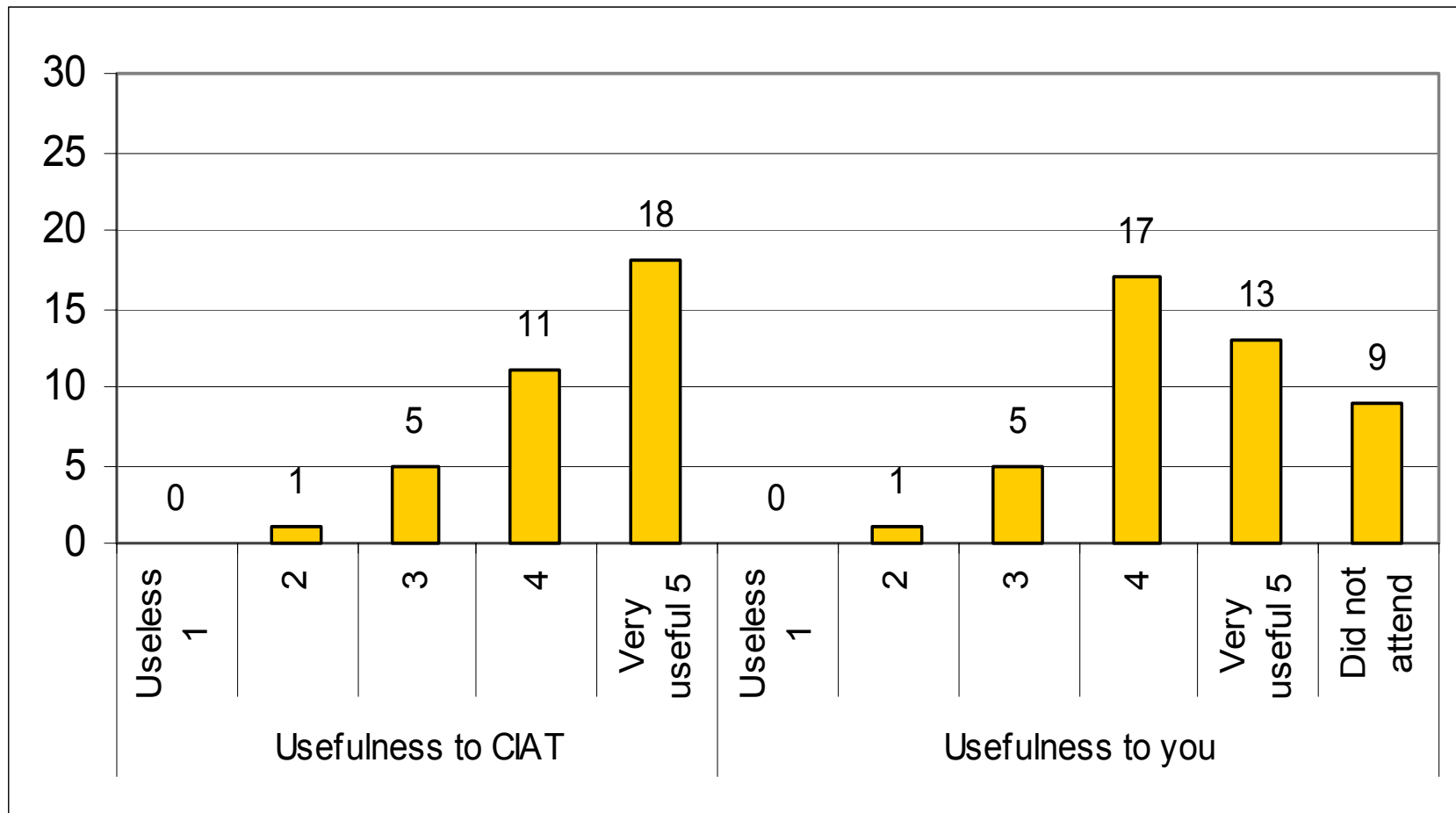
15. Regional/headquarters peer assist



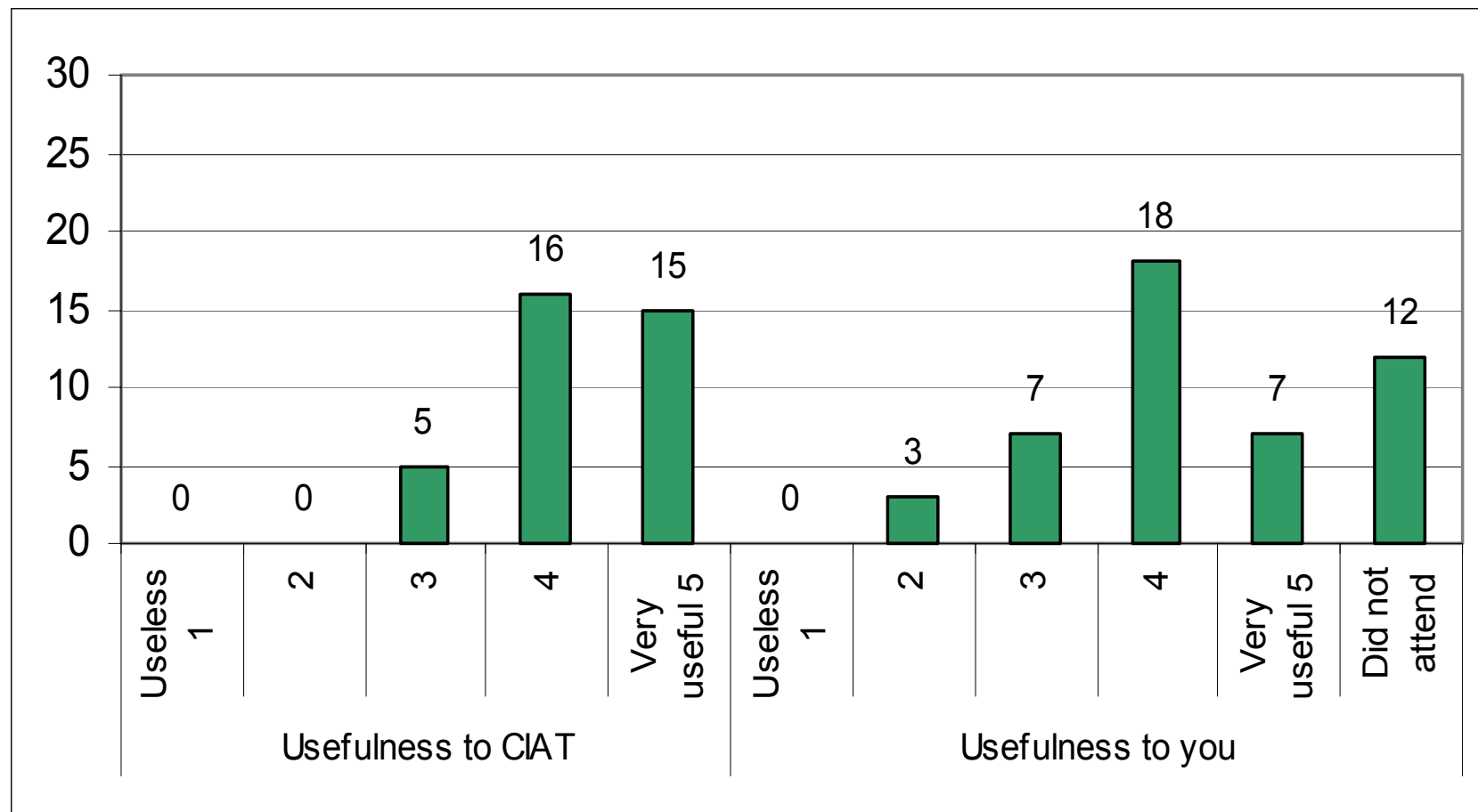
16. What's new in the regions?



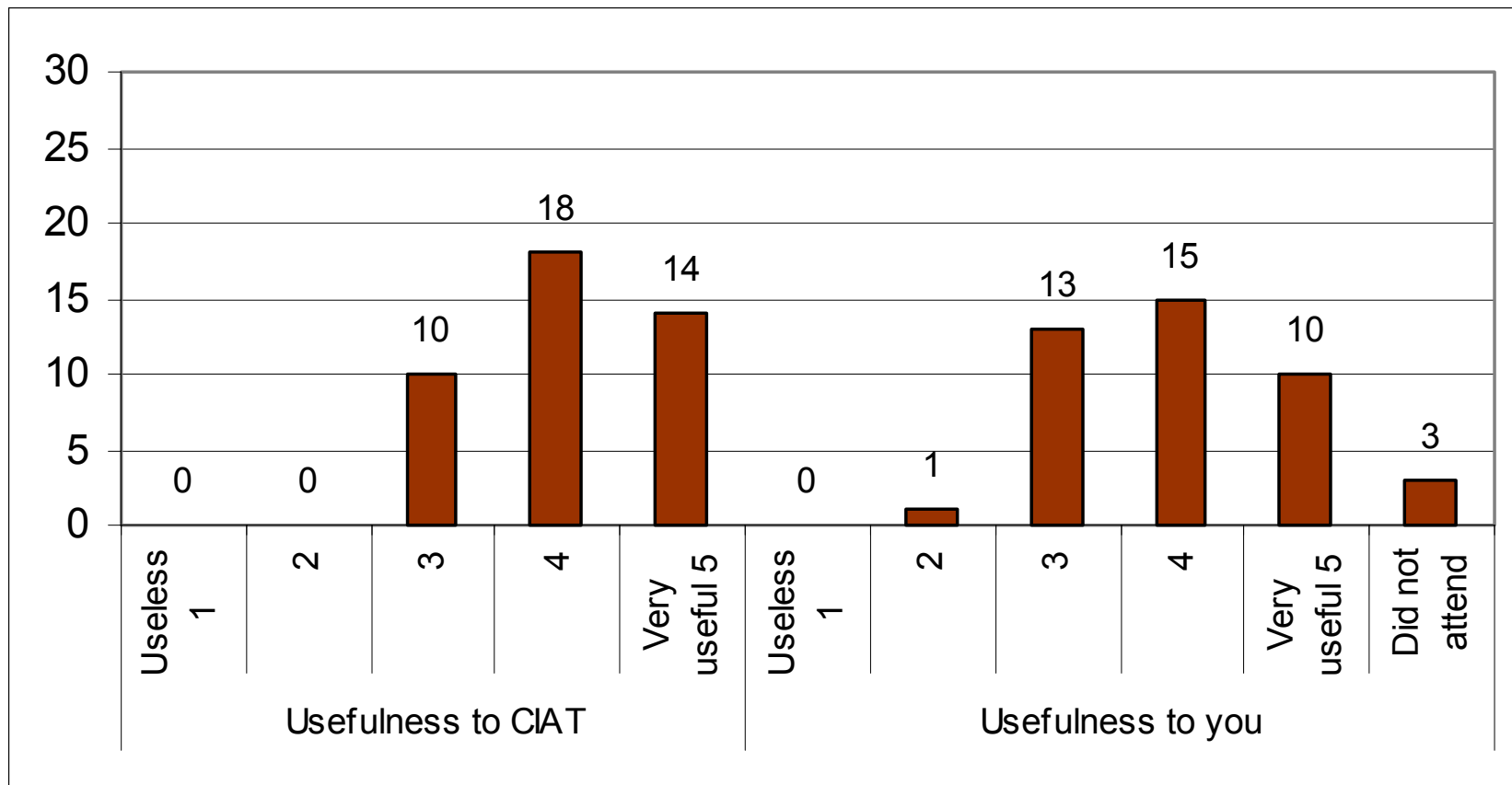
17. Self-organized meetings



18. Business process reengineering

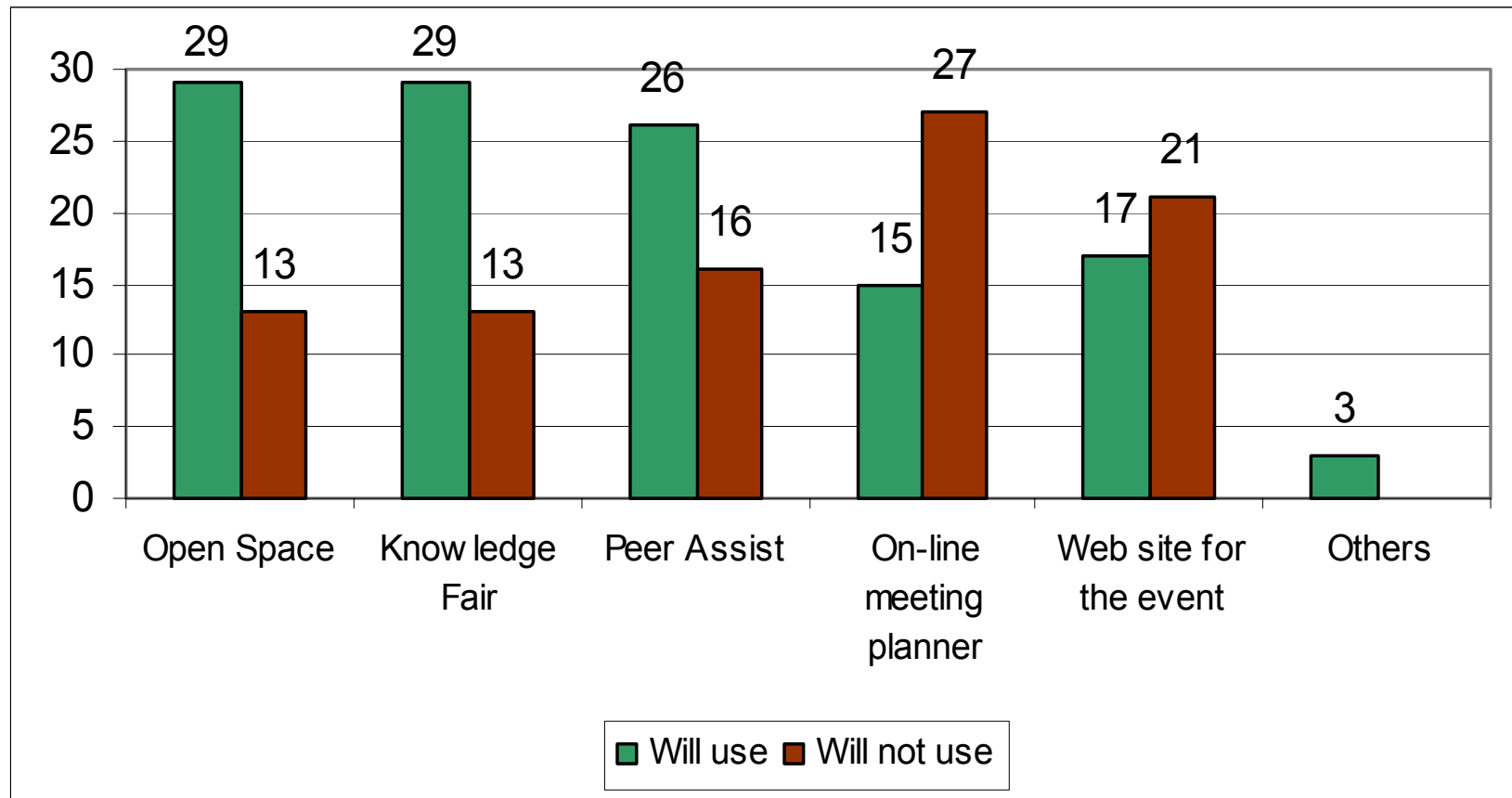


19. Wrap-up session

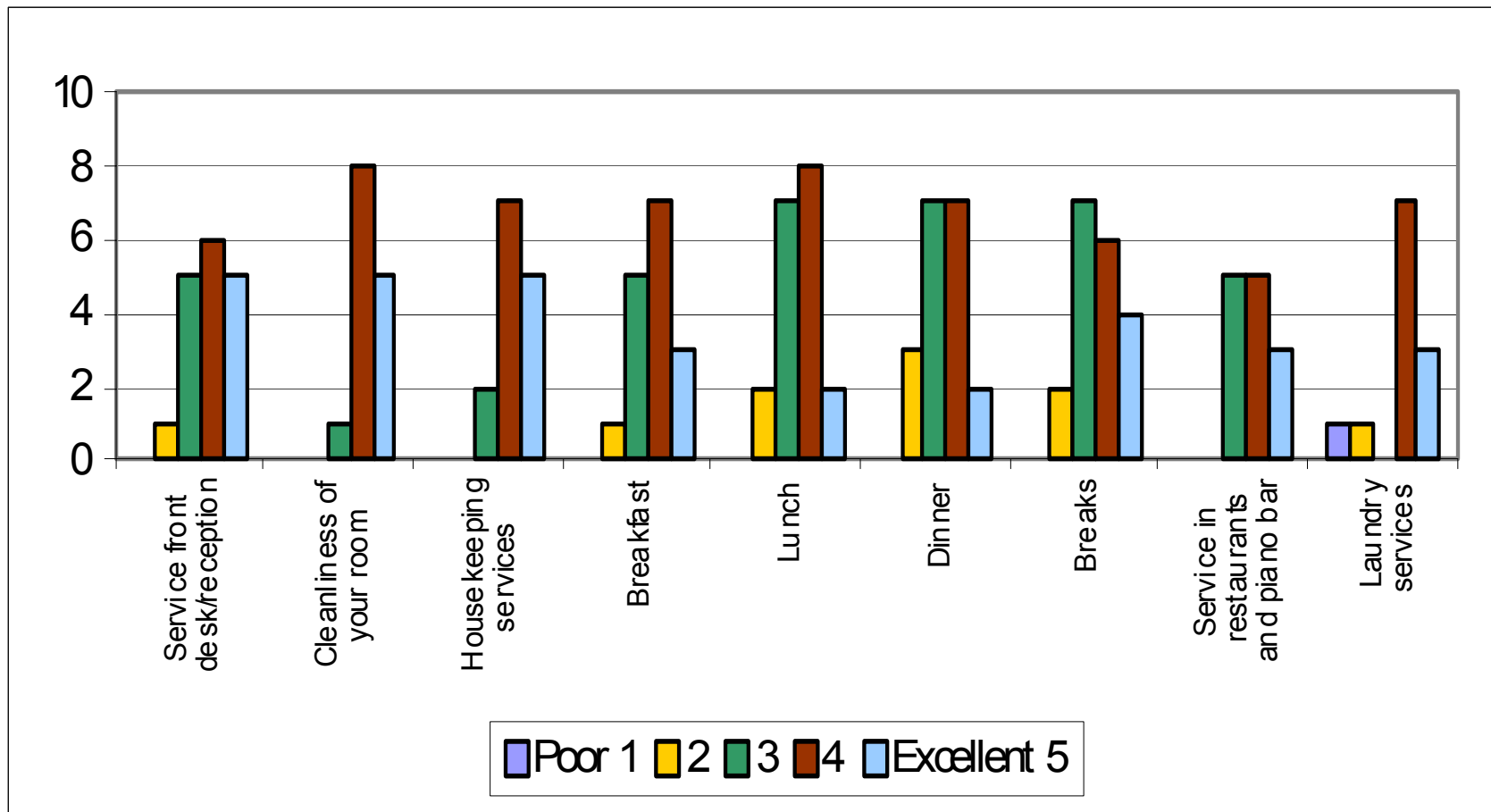


Participant Evaluation Results

22-27. Which of the KS tools you learned about would you like to use, or see used, again in the future?



28-36. CIAT food and housing services





Annex 2

Participant Evaluation Form

We need your opinion! Please take a few minutes to complete this evaluation. The information you provide will help the organizing team to understand your views on "KS Week" and to improve future annual meetings at CIAT and other CGIAR centers.

ABOUT YOURSELF

- Headquarters-based or Outposted
- Research or Research support

How many CIAT Annual Meetings have you attended:

- This is the first Have attended 2 or more

A. GENERAL REACTION

On a scale from 1 to 5, please rate KS Week:

Poor	Fair	Average	Good	Excellent
<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 5

B. ACHIEVEMENT OF OBJECTIVES

On a scale from 1 to 5 rate the extent to which each objective was achieved:

5 = Fully achieved
 1 = Not achieved

General objective: Improve communication, relationships, and collaboration within CIAT.

Not achieved				Fully achieved
<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 5

Specific objectives:

- Develop a shared understanding of the three Development Challenges and contribute to their operationalization
- Enhance the integration of headquarters and regional staff and their activities
- Promote effective work planning by project teams and collaborators
- Demonstrate how KS techniques can help us

<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 5
<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 5
<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 5
<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 5

Comments/suggestions:

C. STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES OF KS WEEK

What were the main **strengths** of KS Week (please be as specific as possible):

What were the main **weaknesses** of KS Week (please be as specific as possible):

D. USEFULNESS OF DIFFERENT SESSIONS AND KS TOOLS USED DURING KS WEEK

Rate the usefulness of each session or tool, in 2 ways:

- Usefulness **to CIAT** as a whole
- Usefulness **to you** personally

Use the following 5-point scale where:

- 5 = Very useful
- 1 = Useless

	Usefulness to CIAT					Usefulness to you					Did not attend/use
	Useless				Very useful	Useless				Very useful	
IT Tools:											
• Web site for KS Week	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 5	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 5	<input type="checkbox"/>
• On-line meeting planner	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 5	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 5	<input type="checkbox"/>
Monday:											
• Opening session (Kellogg Auditorium)	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 5	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 5	<input type="checkbox"/>
• Open Space Workshop: Operationalizing the Development Challenges – Identifying and discussing issues	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 5	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 5	<input type="checkbox"/>
Tuesday:											
• Open Space Workshop: Prioritizing topics and developing action plans	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 5	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 5	<input type="checkbox"/>
Wednesday:											
• Professional Staff Association meeting	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 5	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 5	<input type="checkbox"/>
• Research Support Fair and Expo Agronatura	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 5	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 5	<input type="checkbox"/>
• Question time with the DG	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 5	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 5	<input type="checkbox"/>
Thursday:											
• Regional/headquarters peer assist	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 5	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 5	<input type="checkbox"/>
• What's new in the regions?	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 5	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 5	<input type="checkbox"/>
Friday:											
• Self-organized meetings	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 5	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 5	<input type="checkbox"/>
Saturday:											
• Business process reengineering	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 5	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 5	<input type="checkbox"/>
• Wrap-up session	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 5	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 5	<input type="checkbox"/>

Comments/suggestions:

E. OVERALL USEFULNESS OF KS WEEK

- In general, how would you rate the usefulness of KS Week **for CIAT**, in relation to previous Meeting Weeks?
 - Don't know because I haven't attended previous meetings
 - KS Week was **much more useful** for CIAT than previous Meeting Weeks
 - KS Week was **somewhat more useful** for CIAT
 - KS Week was **equally useful** for CIAT
 - KS Week was **somewhat less useful** for CIAT
 - KS Week was **much less useful** for CIAT

- And in general, how would you rate the usefulness of KS Week **for you**?
 - I haven't attended previous Meeting Weeks
 - KS Week was **much more useful** for me than previous Meeting Weeks
 - KS Week was **somewhat more useful** for me
 - KS Week was **equally useful** for me
 - KS Week was **somewhat less useful** for me
 - KS Week was **much less useful** for me

Comments/suggestions:

What aspects of KS Week were more useful than previous Meeting Weeks, and should be continued in the future?

(Skip this question if this was your first Annual Meeting at CIAT)

What aspects of previous Meeting Weeks were more useful than KS Week, and should be re-introduced?

(Skip this question if this was your first Annual Meeting at CIAT)

F. FUTURE USE OF TOOLS FOR KNOWLEDGE SHARING

Which of the KS tools you learned about during KS Week would you like to use, or see used, again in the future:

- Open space
- Knowledge fair
- Peer assist
- On-line meeting planner
- Web site for the event
- Others (please indicate which ones)

G. SUGGESTIONS

How can future Annual Meetings at CIAT be improved?

More broadly, how can knowledge sharing at CIAT be improved?

H. CIAT FOOD AND HOUSING SERVICES

On a scale of 1 to 5, how would you rate the following:

	Poor				Excellent
• The service at the front desk/reception	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 5
• The cleanliness of your room upon your arrival	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 5
• Housekeeping services throughout the week	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 5
• Quality of the following meals:					
– Breakfast	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 5
– Lunch	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 5
– Dinner	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 5
– Breaks	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 5
• Overall service provided in the restaurants and piano bar	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 5
• Laundry services	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 5

Comments/suggestions:

I. FINAL COMMENTS/SUGGESTIONS

Include here any other comments or suggestions you have for the organizers of KS Week:



**CIAT's Knowledge
Sharing Week**

Dynamic Communication for Change

Cali, Colombia, 29 November - 4 December 2004

Annex 3

Participant Evaluation

Responses to the open-ended
questions



I. ACHIEVEMENTS OF THE OBJECTIVES

- Objectives need to be internalized by people upfront
- Open Space should have been focused on relevant issues + not interest points
- The second session should have been documented as this was the recommendation stage so a missed opportunity
- The KS week brought a new and excellent approach to annual meetings. It should allow scientists to publicize their project areas of work.
- More structure and guidelines to groups and open spaces rather than focusing mostly on the participatory methods for their own sake.
- Better definition of what we are trying to achieve
- The KS week did not provide sufficient background knowledge on the DCs, hence precluded effective work planning.
- Select specific research and/or development topics for the open space workshop seeking broad input before the meeting (on type of topic)
- I think this process should have the participation of all principal staff HQ based and also include national staff.
- Get people first up to a common level and then proceed
- KS improved interactions among outposted and HQ staff. Still to be seen if this improves integration.
- Very interesting and educative to me.
- I see KS week as an experiment in which the most useful thing has been to go through it. I don't see we have produced a revolutionary documents or product but the experience has changed my appreciation of CIAT and my colleagues.
- Reverse the week – peer assist to get people talking. Present the DCs (aims & activities) then proceed with operationalization.
- At the beginning more open time needed to interact, i.e. put the fair first. Or after a few presentations to get people up to level, allowing then reflection.
- Well planned methodology but poorly planned content.
- More information before starting the KS week. Clear objectives share with participants helps getting better idea on how to benefit from the exercise.
- A good tool to make ONE CIAT.
- The process in KS was useful, but the time was too little to develop useful content for the DC.
- Follow Joachim's suggestion – allow getting to know / KS events to begin – then more into substantive issues. Perhaps Nathalie's suggestion – let each project program show how they are contributing to the DCs. This will put us on a common footing.
- Could be improved.
- Maybe the objective "contribute to operationalize the Dcs" should have been discussed more before the week, eg the DG could have opened an e-mail discussion with all staff. People don't read agendas or objectives of meetings until the meeting actually starts.
- Good techniques employed for the wrong purpose

- DCs now need re-meeting.
- The integration of three challenge development programmes did not come out clearly, there is a need of further discussions.
- Faltó una major explicación previa al personal nacional de lo que son los 3 developing challenges
- Start with the clients first, so give first voice to Regional Coordinators, but not to express what their management problems are, but to present the needs of their partners and clients in the regions.
- It is not clear if there is a need to operationalize the Development Challenges *per se* (Staff has made clear that another layer of management was unnecessary and irrelevant), but rather the interaction between the Development Challenges.

II. What were the main strengths of KS Week (please be as specific as possible)

- This is a very structured way to get people's ideas exposed in different contexts
- The possibility of choosing topics for discussion ensures that one keeps interested in participating in meetings
- Highly social, not stressing or competitive
- I was involved in some interesting ideas
- Creating an opportunity for interaction with different expertise in open discussions.
- Practical experience for staff in use of a range of participatory methods for "smart interaction"
- Great for brainstorming
- Integration among staff – especially HQ staff with outposted
- Better understanding of the growing gap between the biological and social science at CIAT.
- Good forum to interact/exchange ideas
- Workshop for prioritizing topics and for developing action plans for DCs were very useful to share knowledge, experiences, ideas with several colleagues.
- Excellent medium for KS and integration of HQ and regional staff.
- New techniques properly presented and implemented.
- Well lead and well documented process.
- Excellent leadership, a lot of work behind the scene.
- Lots of interaction, space and time.
- Question time with the DG. Promote culture of transparency.
- Fostered cultural and attitudinal change.
- Good methods shown, and experiences gathered.
- Bring people together.
- Open discussions.
- Knowledge of open space.
- Peer assist session. Great process.
- Opportunity to interact in small, self-selected groups around themes we defined as important.
- Openness and fresh approach.
- Provided an opportunity to understand the work of others first hand.
- Opportunity to integrate with outposted staff.
- Motivated interactions and sharing experiences or knowledge.

- Open agenda. It let's issues evolve naturally.
- Interactions.
- Interactions.
- Wide participation, openness, trust. Participation DG/Research Director/Board at equal level.
- The comments of participants' sessions at the end of each section/day.
- Developing action plans on set priorities
- Have space to share with other scientists (HQ + Outposted) main strategic issues and find out we have similar worries and easily can come up with consensus views the way forward -> we should take more advantage of it.
- Make people buy change, rather than suffer change. Openness of discussions.
- Methodology, bring people together, sharing experience approaches, reflecting.
- Process good for getting to know, but substantive issues not addressed fully. DC are fine but serious deficits still exist in center/regional arrangements, KS between regions and projects, regional program relationship. These edeficits were hidden under DC.
- Interactive, market place, creativity, horizontality.
- Good planning, clear and easy to follow methodologies.
- Participatory approach, open space format, facilitator Allison very good.
- Facilitate integration and interaction.
- Open space – both physical (arches) as conceptually (flexible format, transparent process, encouraging for participation). Organized, facilitated by outsiders provides a more “objective” conduction of the agenda, enhance freedom to participate.
- Can't think of any, perhaps the introduction of the open space method.
- Open agenda helped partnership formation.
- Interactions among scientists, Group discussions and experience sharing
- Favorece la integración por la metodología empleada (panel abiertos), pero a la vez mediante la creación de los grupos, permite priorizar acuerdo a los intereses de cada persona.
- Interactions with colleagues, particularly from the regions, were no doubt very useful.

III. What were the main weaknesses of KS Week (please be as specific as possible)

- Lack of clarity about the objectives upfront
- Overlapping of meetings for discussion of topics of interest
- Perhaps little gain but this is not a strong feeling
- No feeling of rounding out the process but that maybe too easy.
- Sessions were too brief. Need more time for discussions and introduction of themes.
- No opportunity to focus on content/understanding of the DCs. Lost an opportunity to incorporate Outposted staff and needs of Africa/Asia in the DC concepts.
- We did not address many important aspects as no one wants to take responsibilities for them.
- Not structured around objectives – therefore output is difficult to analyze.
- Did not address DCs needs, objectives and future directions. Not much new came out of the first two days.
- Because of lack of clarity on what the DCs were, we did not advance much on the mechanisms to integrate projects and or ways to make them operational.

- Identification of the topics for the DC. Would be better to let everybody to prepare it.
- Discussions about the proposal strategies and rules don't include proposals led by partners (where CIAT has a role to play to assist and where CIAT has sometimes to gain)
- It's role of a forum for work planning is deficient
- Native English speakers organizers did not communicate enough
- Some parallel events that didn't allow full participation.
- Too little concrete outcomes
- Lack of national staff participation
- Got a little bit tired of sitting in meetings.
- Not everyone attended, especially national staff.
- Too many participants doing the same thing. Kind of waste of time, redundancy.
- Too large a group
- Attendance fell
- Lack of knowledge among Outposted staff on DCs.
- Diffuse process
- Overlapping was a problem
- Little time to visit the fair
- Kind of loose conclusion
- Tried to address too many issues in too many areas.
- Scientific issues not much highlighted.
- Not inclusive of NRS.
- Some sessions were too short to give individuals time to share knowledge.
- Open agenda: it may be 'too open' and lack focus.
- Lack of substance. Don't give sales pitch. Stick to the hard issues.
- Non-achievement of the goals.
- Did not get far enough on DCs-> need for more common bases and more focus.
- We were not at the same level of knowledge about the DCs when we started.
- Priority setting needs adequate time and information/knowledge sharing.
- Not clear guidelines before hand. I was quite lost before the week started and was not clear what it was all about.
- Staff preparation to the different exercises. Previous knowledge of DCs irregular across staff.
- Time was short for certain stages, lack of common understanding of content.
- Some more opportunity for KS
- Attendance by HQ staff, not much progress on DCs
- Some crossing of schedule (appreciative inquiry prevented from attending question time with the DG.)
- Not enough time for discussion, ... some sessions, could benefit from more planning, run entirely by social scientists.
- We were not able to be in other groups because discussions took place at the same time.
- Clarity among participants as to what we were to do
- Not being participatory at the design stage – should have requested input from all staff on the expected objective of the meeting with maybe 2 month advance.
- Flawed process → agenda driven by certain people. Not applicable for the set goal of 3DC clarification.

- More focus needed on operationalizin. Internally focused, need ext. stakeholder views.
- Regional priorities and particularities were not well articulated and shared
- El idioma (ingles) sigue siendo una desventaja para favorecer la participaci3n del personal nacional que hubiesen estadop interesados (falto traducci3n simultanea)
- Conflict of agendas: the KS week clashes with other works that cannot be left unattended, namely conversations of Staff evaluation and reports for Special Projects.
- No possibility left to study each Action Plan proposed and to get back to it in plenary. In other words, we identified good things to move forward collectively, and we are left a bit in the middle of nowhere. KS was from that perspective shorthened, and left to internal committees, while the presence of outposted Staff was not exploited to the extent possible.

IV. Usefulness of the different sessions and KS tools

- Peer assist session: there should be the opportunity to discuss the problem with more then two groups. 3 or 4 groups would be ideal.
- Due to conflict meetings I was ... other things. If these were included in the program, I would have rated it more highly, so score looks low but my time was well spent.
- To make these tools even more useful, time should be allocated for synthesis and group discussions.
- The “What’s New in the Regions” is a key session. In future years all regions where CIAT works should be represented.
- Support services fair: well done, next time support units will come with better and refined ideas.
- I traveled to Panama on Thursday, Friday for stakeholder meeting
- Some sessions could be organized as a “retreat” to avoid “distractions” and promote high attendance.
- It made me think about CIAT’s historic evolution and look at the big picture and its future.
- Better planning + information sharing before KS week. More participation of support staff during the fair sharing their work will facilitate more integration.
- The different aspects of KS week ... in but focused on developing a common understanding between Outposted and HQ staff.
- Rated 2 for “What’s new in the regions” because I can’t believe that CA and HQ did not get a chance to present. Like if nothing were done. Also the presentations of the regions should have referred to links with projects of HQ plus other regions – if they have links!
- The Fair is inappropriate and out-of-place in relation to a planning exercise for CIAT Staff. It is counter-productive and gives the wrong impression that time is value less. As a consequence Staff are going back to their offices and reply e-mails or advance other business.
- There might be good pieces of information for the outposted Staff, but the venue – a fair - might not be the best mean to forge scientific collaborations. Instead, a thematic congress might serve the outposted Staff better.

V. Overall usefulness of KS week

- The project fair is an excellent idea to complement the exchange of knowledge and ideas from colleagues with the additional advantage of integrating national staff to the week activities.
- The KS week format should be adopted for meetings but refine it with project fairs and presentations.
- Good to vary the approaches across years. We don't need a standard format, but let's continue to be adaptive (although not innovative for its own sake)
- We need procedures for planning what we want to be. Evolution normally leads to dead ends.
- Have fewer sessions in order to concentrate in 2 or 3 issues related to integration and research of center wide relevance.
- The KS week provided me information on issues affecting farmer interests unknown to me.
- Much more mingling and communication
- If Ks and planning is sought for the 3 DCs I would suggest for next year having one day reserved to each and participants indicate their past and future contributions to the objectives (challenges) and what they need from others. Then, offers and demands can be teamed to later on work on making their complementarities more effective.
- Keep on doing this in following years
- Get projects more introduced with their new things, to get to know these things
- This was something new and different.
- I have found the dynamics of KS week promoting a positive interaction among staff that was more efficient than in previous years.
- Need for more structured content.
- Getting knowing each other better help us to establish more productive alliances and give new ideas about collaboration.
- I liked it most in terms of approach.
- This approach allows far more involvement of Outposted staff.
- Mix best of both.
- Participation of staff (both from HQ and Outposted) was not constant. Some sessions were not attended by some people.
- With a bit more planning could be useful.
- Excellent opportunity to participate, speak, listen...everything.
- Could be improved even more with team based operationalization of Dcs. More specific info on projects would be good.
- A brief presentation about each Development Challenge might have been useful, particularly how each DC sees the interactions with the other DCs, for example projects to be developed together, areas where expertise is required from other DCs. The Open Space was left quite open, and mixed issues came up (some directly related to the issues at stake = relationships between the DCs, relationships with regional offices; while other issues were merely technical and not related to the central topics set forward by Senior Management).
- A very important topic – the participation of nationally recruited Staff – was misunderstood, because poorly introduced. An opportunity was lost, while there is no doubt that it was of uttermost importance for the Center to achieve its mission.

VI. What aspects of KS Week were more useful than previous Meeting Weeks, and should be continued in the future?

- Question to the Dg. Should be open to more staff
- Peer assist- fantastic!
- Priority setting – democratic and effective
- Peer assist, Market place
- Chance to present new ideas. Fresh air and less power point
- Research support fair.
- Not sitting in closed rooms watching power point presentations
- The open space workshop methodology but applied to issues (research or other) of high relevance to the center.
- The opportunity for all staff members to speak and contribute.
- More communication, more learning from each other
- The interaction through the different exercises, which were all well done.
- Question time with the DG
- Open space methodology
- Fairs, question time, peer assist
- The name KS is perhaps a misname. What knowledge have we shared?
- Better integration
- Interactive approach, maybe not open space but other techniques promoting interactive approach should be used.
- Better interaction and participation.
- More interaction among individuals.
- Open space discussion of issues.
- This process enables us to participate actively. Past formats are equivalent to read the projects report.
- Yes, the KS week should continue.
- Open interaction and cross exchange of ideas and experiences.
- Able to meet with more people.
- Less focus on the type of information presented. There needs to be more “precooking” of the critical issues.
- The peer assist and open space sessions were very useful. The peer assist outcomes were useful. The open space outcomes less so as they needed further directing to stay on the theme.
- More interaction and integration, did not get tired i.e. interest was kept ... to put KS week as high priority.
- Broad interaction.
- Research support services fair. Integration with national staff.
- Effective way to improve and interaction with other people at HQ and outposted.
- To take about priority issues, identified by the group.
- Elements that allow sharing of information between Outposted and HQ staff, planning process.
- Peer assist, barometer team, and appreciative inquiry. All provided opportunity for interaction.
- Mobiliy, areas, fresh air, discussions
- Fair types of events (probably choose some groups one year, some groups other year)

- Peer assist. It addressed real issues and provided some concrete way forward themes.
- We started this week being together in an open space, interaction/integration took place easily. We feel relax and could participate.
- Open space. Circle - everybody at the same level, not the presenter speaker verusu the audience format. Knowledge fair.
- Process.

VII. What aspects of previous Meeting Weeks were more useful than KS Week, and should be re-introduced?

- Short presentations of what is being done at HQ through the “project fair”
- Presentations or KS on content (updates) of the projects
- Technical discussion was lacking this week. It was all on processes and nothing on what we could really do.
- None
- Effective work planning.
- A fair in which people can present research or services highlights in form of power points and/or posters
- Presentations of all projects helped give the doses of formal presentations that people are asking for.
- I cannot think of a single one
- HQ and LAC as regional presentations
- Information exchange
- More scientific content
- More sharing of information on what is actually happening.
- Being updated on scientific advances.
- There should be some previous introductions to specific topics.
- Scientific presentations on new research results.
- Avoid ONG guy (group) making presentations and rest listening. Promote open discussions on common goals/objectives.
- Information exchange on projects- although do not return to old format. Move to a fair approach.
- Will wait for next week. But need a bit more KS i.e. presentations on all regions including HQ. What do we do with regions with few staff (West Africa, France, US)
- There was more scientific/grounded content.
- Few structured presentations that provide updates on thematic issues (DC).
- Some formal session emphasizing scientific progress and impact of our work towards meeting the broad goal of the center.
- Have project technical meeting structured such as a way to other scientists from different projects could get more detail of what is happening and facilitate new project ideas/collaboration.
- Background information to allow planning.
- Presentations of projects are informative.
- Bringing everybody up to speed on what is happening at CIAT.
- More participation from Outside partners.
- Joint planning between regional and HQ staff.
- More previous clarity through email communication on issues and objective.
- More specific info re activities.

VIII. How can future Annual Meetings at CIAT be improved?

- Ensure more participation and commitment
- More information upfront in e-debate. Create facilitator for this group
- Question session for the DG to include all MT members
- Some more formal organization and structure.
- Include more research related issues as entry points for discussion
- Incorporate the KS (open space, peer assist in small group meetings) strength into the conventional work planning.
- Better selection of the open space topics
- We need to find a mechanism to link work plans, proposals, Challenge Programs, DCs, CIAT's BPR in a better way (also performance monitoring and evaluation/impact assessment)
- Everybody has to attend. No excuse! Get national staff in!
- More time for people to present their annual work and future plans
- Define objective more specifically rather than try to do a little of everything.
- Combine positive elements of previous meetings and KS open space approach (50%-50%).
- KS week should be used at project level.
- Hybrid of scientific presentations and KS week.
- Reinforce discussions. Reduce, eliminate PowerPoint presentations.
- Put the decision-making activities later in the week.
- TRY (!!) to make sure people plan & participate to minimize conflicting events & decrease the escape factors.
- Include more on science in the fair, with support staff responsibility.
- Providing background information to all professional staff before the meeting. Provide brief updates on the DC. Sharing knowledge on successes and failures
- Rotate more in depth revision other than genetic improvement projects as has been happening in letter years. I'd like to see more about Natural Resources.
- Balancing old and new formula. People want to discuss science also, present their highlights.
- Marriage between this approach and previous format.
- What are the burning issues – canvas these first and provide space (open?) to deal with them.
- Discuss DC each alone.
- Annual meetings offer opportunities for developing at least concept notes integrating ideas from scientists that at this time of the year have the opportunity to be together.
- Be precise in what you want to achieve, For these defined topics reserve enough time, Don't try to overachieve, Never try to work on vaguely defined, differently perceived outcomes
- Why not develop the scene of DCs with scientific content presentations from the groups.
- The annual meetings should rotate in the region, not only being held at headquarters
- Mayor participación del personal nacional, Traducción simultanea para el personal no-bilingue que desee asistir

IX. More broadly, how can knowledge sharing at CIAT be improved?

- More use of IT technologies: chats, e-conferences

- More concrete ideas of decisions made.
- Ensure more participation by HQ scientists – some sessions had more outposted staff present when topic was how to ensure better HG/Outposted interaction.
- Identify critical topics – outline meeting or event to come up with needed outputs.
- Have a market place of projects/ regions as a way to share information
- Increase the KS at the project level.
- Continuing to push for awareness of existing KS techniques and approaches
- Provide training, support and coaching of these approaches for interested implementers (particularly in outposted offices)
- Through a process of participatory PM&E of projects and how they contribute to the DCs. Sharing the information on what others are doing
- Plan theme more cautiously
- Use other techniques in different sized groups.
- Have regional/project fairs staged each year, ie. LA year 1, Africa year 2, Asia etc or themes
- Include donors, partners and local staff.
- Perhaps identify issues to be discussed earlier on.
- Better access to brief information (1 page sheet, which can be a poster for the week) on each special project, CIAT project, or Region.
- More support staff from HQ and regions participating.
- By involving national support staff more in decision making and info sharing.
- With clear guidelines beforehand.
- Extending exercise, more than a one a year event, opening to national staff, and to the regions, with partners
- Do not include aspects which require time to plan as time element was limited.
- Will submit proposal on KS across regions – see group discussion from priority no. 3 of the open space.
- A bit more time listening to each other.
- Outcome: initiative presented integrating people from different challenge programs in this KS week.
- Topic / problem driven planning meetings
- Need more basis about other projects (as well as support)
- Exchange of experiences and visit and trip reports made public

X. Food and Housing services

- Distribute list of names / hotel room numbers to facilitate finding people or establish a notice board in central place as we do in center of Nairobi in front of a tree where anyone can post a message for others. E-mail does not enough for outposted staff.
- Renovate the apartments, more light, more modern and attractive interiors
- Thanks for introducing fruits instead of the greasy staff
- Reintroduce do it yourself laundry system.
- Fruit during the breaks was a good addition.
- The outside environment of rooms could be improved – tall grass and a bit of cleaning.
- Concrete the paths, so that the roll- away suitcase don't make a racket at 5 am as persons leave for the airport. menus did not vary enough.

XI. Final comments. Suggestions

- Congratulations!
- I enjoyed the week, it was a good opportunity to discuss ideas and meet people. I like to be involved in most tasks and a result – not meaning my views – is necessary. But a feeling of a start, a middle, and end point. My feeling is that entering a state of more information is probably positive as people are now more receptive to change. I had the view that the DCs were a good move and in use generally supported. I suggest this more.
- Good job. Break out the windows in the Meeting Rooms
- We shared methods rather than knowledge
- The KS week output to be organized with much more technical inputs from CIAT's work in the DCs
- Greatest appreciation for the excellent work of Allison and Simone, of course also Nathan and Doug Horton.
- Congratulations to Doug Pachico who was brave enough to agree to these major changes against the skepticism of many research staff.
- A warm congratulation.
- Overall outstanding
- Excellent organization. Congratulations!
- Get rid of the mosquitoes
- Overall a job well done, question time should be extended to regional managers and other MT people.
- It was a very successful and useful week.
- Overall I am happy with this experience.
- A great start improving KS and improving CIAT. A way to go but a good start. The team is to be congratulated.
- Be more knowledgeable of the contents of the theme to deal with. Good knowledge of the facilitation tool is far from being enough to succeed.
- Have done an excellent job. Keep it up for next annual planning meetings.
- The KS format is more suitable to discuss very general issues, but may not be the most suitable for coming up with concrete plans. The issues to be discussed need to be carefully chosen before we start and the objectives more clearly defined if we want to reach implementable action plans.
- I believe you should invite a couple of board members (at least) to attend the week. VERY GOOD LEARNING EXERCISE FOR BOARD MEMBERS.
- Was to me an enriching experience which could be adopted to other.
- Start with getting to know/communications items (eg. Fair) and end with more substantive / decision items.
- Information about organization (schedules etc) arrived rather late. Too much overlap with meetings. Consider pre post meeting workshops for skill building events such as Appreciative Inquiry.
- It would be good if two or three projects join efforts, bring consultant and conduct mini workshops on this methodology.
- Very well organized event.
- Use more facilitators for more activities. Though Allison did a great job, I would have liked to see more relation than what we had with the scientists. Not just Doug, Nathan, Simone and 2 others are all like part of the same team.
- Good idea, let's work on it.



Annex 4

Barometer Team

Recommendations

Professional Staff Association Meeting

- **Include a one hour session for members of the PSA.**

“This was a good opportunity for outposted staff to be alerted about health insurance and retirement.”

Research Support & Service Fair and Expo Agronatura

- **Organise a fair at the next Annual Meeting for each project to have a presence, as well as support services and Agronatura.**

“People seemed to get the information that they needed and in some cases got more work done than expected. For one individual, the fair gave him the opportunity to solve a computer problem at the IS booth, finalized a contract with HR people, solve a financial problem at finance stand and obtained relevant info at the library.”

“Visiting scientists who came to help translations said they learned a lot.”

- **Include a booth for Management so that staff can meet with them one-on-one.**
- **Provide guidelines for booths to be sure they are “client-oriented”.**

“No one asked me the question: ‘What do you need?’”

- **Stimulate participation at the fair by not having all-day parallel meetings.**

“The Appreciative Inquiry workshop was held at the same time as the fair. Since the workshop require full-time participation throughout the day, there was no time for people to visit the fair.”

- **Include ways to track fair participants (National or International, HQ or Regional).**

“Fair organizers will meet next week to provide a sense of what worked, what didn’t work, who participated and their perspective on the overall effectiveness of the session.”

Question Time with the DG

- **All Senior Management should be included in a question time session. This would include the Directors of Finance, Research, Administration and Agronatura**

“It was a positive thing that the DG exposed himself to all staff.”

- **Provide simultaneous translation, as necessary.**
- **Find ways to improve the Nariño (and other) meeting rooms. This could include removing tables and serious interior decorating.**

*“I would like to take a sledgehammer to those windows.
And what about those rugs?”*

Peer Assist Session

- **Recognise staff for their willingness to be a Peer Assissee.**

“It was pretty brave of people to raise personal problems.”

- **Advertise and market the session to increase participation.**

“That was true knowledge sharing.”

*“We had 35 regional staff participating but only
15 headquarter staff showed up.”*

- **Consider omitting plenary sessions for reporting back. Are they really necessary?**

*“It is difficult for many people to summarize
and report back in a short period of time.
Do we really need to have a plenary session
for reporting back when the topics are so specific?”*

- **Keep the groups small (5 or 6 people per group) to help draw out participants who don't always participate.**

*“Strong facilitation skills and small groups can help bring everyone's voice
into the discussions.”*

- **Be sure people understand that the suggestions or solutions help the Peer Assissee solve his/her problem. They should not be directed to someone else ie. management.**

*“Some of the recommendations were often measures that the individual
can't implement alone but at least they are now in the public domain.
Three months down the line people can now as Douglas Pachico “How's
it going on your issue related to the exclusion of key staff in proposal
development?””*

What's New in the Regions

- Give projects the opportunity to share what they are doing and to identify ways to collaborate. Powerpoint presentations are one way, but a “Project Fair” might also be effective.

“We need some concrete information on research in a more standard format.”

- Provide opportunities for staff to improve their presentation skills so that they can deliver their messages effectively.
- Improve the meeting room, or choose one that has more light and fresh air.

Annual Meetings

- Look at alternative scheduling for annual meetings. Meeting could take place every second year or have only half of the staff participate each year.
- Alternate the venue of the meeting between the Regions and Headquarters.

Learning to Innovate Session using the Appreciative Inquiry Methodology

- Help clarify the vision of the other Development Challenges using the Appreciative Inquiry Methodology.

“Consider using AI approach to move forward on the other development challenges.”

Ensuring a common starting point

- Involve more outposted staff in the pre-meeting consultations to gauge their level of understanding on the theme.

“The group wasn't prepared to go to operationalisation.”

- Provide clarity on the theme prior to the session. This could be done in a plenary through presentations.

“We should have done a better job of determining whether people understood the topic well enough to discuss it.”

- Ensure consistency in the messages being delivered.

“Two of the three development challenges were presented differently the morning of the presentation. This may have affected the way people participated.”

- Exploring alternative themes for next year's meeting
- Use the Open Space methodology to discuss research topics of interest to staff or how projects fit within the Development Challenges.

"People wanted to talk about their work."

"People seemed to support a fresh approach."

Improving the process

- Use an iterative process that allows staff to get to know each other over and develop action plans over the week. This could include morning activities focusing on connecting people and afternoons in plenary listening to presentations.

"Staff need more opportunities to connect and to get to know each other; more time is needed before coming together to develop plans; more of an iterative process is needed."

- Allow more time to develop action plans.

"Time for action planning was too short."

- Introduce a session where staff can ask themselves what they will do differently as a result of the session.

"It would have been good for people to discuss how their project could contribute to the Development Challenges."

- Allow for more time to develop action plans.
- Provide staff with opportunities to build facilitation skills.
- Introduce a session where staff can ask themselves what will they be doing differently as a result of the session.

Increasing Participation of National Staff

- Directive for attendance of National Staff needs to come from Senior Management.
- Identify ways to increase national staff participation during the week.

"Overall, we had great attendance but after many attempts to include national staff there was only a slight improvement over last year in their participation."

- Make National staff participation an agenda item for the meeting.

Improving Logistics

- Start sessions after 8:30am, preferably at 9:00am.
- Use outdoor space when possible but ensure that the speaker system works well.

“People seemed to like the fresh air.”

- Schedule a “warm-up” session on the afternoon of Day 1 to deal with the effects of jet lag.
- Find alternative ways to communicate changes in session start times. One idea is to announce at the beginning of the week that we may need to change session times and will notify staff of the changes on a “newsboard”.
- Explore the possibility of using other venues that can bring all staff together in a circle.
- Encourage staff who travel to arrive earlier, to deal with the effects of jetlag.