IT SCHOOLS AFRICA
Transforming lives through access to e-Learning

Report to Fondation Eagle
Liwonde Community Day Secondary School IT Lab Project

Introduction

On 12th January 2018 Fondation Eagle kindly donated £10,595.00 to IT Schools Africa, for the completion of an IT lab at Liwonde Community Day Secondary School in Malawi. The project was completed within in a timely manner with a small over-spend of £77.86.

How we used the grant

We used the grant to provide a fully equipped IT lab for the students and teachers so they can benefit from accessing ICT. The lab has 40 networked computers, printer, digital projector, teacher's laptop and an Internet subscription for one month.

Liwonde Community Day Secondary School

Liwonde Community Day Secondary School is a co-ed school established in 2001 by the Malawian Government, it is about 120kms from Blantyre. In 2014 the school became a 'double shift' school essentially enabling an additional cohort of students to enrol, by setting two school programmes each day.

The school will benefit from the IT facilities as it will enable access to the educational resources preinstalled on the computers (there is a shortage of books in the school library), it will ease of lesson preparation and delivery for the teachers and increase the number of users (as the school has the highest enrolment in the district). In addition, the school has six IT teachers which will be huge benefit to the lab project as they will now be able to teach their subject in a practical class.

Refurbishment

The refurbishment work progressed well; the team began by removing three of the old pin boards to make space for the white board and the projector screen. The remaining board was plastered over to be used as the projector 'screen'. The teacher's desk is positioned below the screen and is built as a panelled box, with a small door so that the teacher can keep his or her personal items safely tucked away.

Fabrication of desks and benches

The desks were purpose built for the classroom. In addition, we built 13 long, steel and wood benches for the students to sit on. We have learned from previous projects that it can be beneficial for schools, particularly large schools, to have the option of allowing more than one student per computer. If chairs are provided it makes this difficult to achieve. Ideal ratios of one student per computer are often not a reality and has to be factored in when planning each individual lab project.

For schools like Liwonde having an IT Lab is such an asset, they want to maximise its potential and enable as many students as possible to benefit from it.
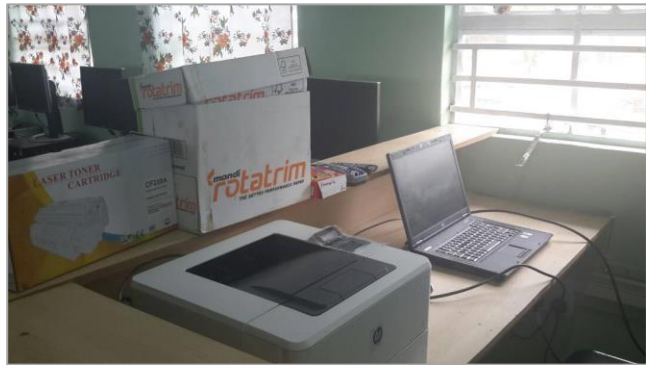
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Rewiring

We had expected the electrical material to be more costly than some of the previous projects due to the poor condition of the existing electrics. This also meant that fitting the electrics took longer than expected. Subsequently the labour costs were more than originally budgeted for.

Equipment installation

We installed 40 refurbished computers as well as the teacher's laptop, laser printer and digital projector in the lab. In the original budget we had left out the networking equipment, to keep the costs down, fortunately we were able to use some of the budget to network the computers via cable. We also included a one month subscription for the Internet (for use on five of the computers), to complete their network

and access package. ITSA agreed to donate an additional computer for the school's office for general admin purposes.

The completed lab

Before   *After*

Opening Ceremony

The opening ceremony went well; the deputy head teacher spoke on behalf of the head and was particularly overcome with emotion as he expressed his delight at the school's new IT Lab and surprise at how quickly it had been completed.

"We have never seen such a beautiful computer lab as this one in our whole district area, and with student benches to sit on."

"I thank IT School Africa and Fondation Eagle for giving the chance to improve the school's learning skills. On behalf of School and all authorities, I extend profound gratitude for the great gift."

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Financial report (Exchange rate K960)

BUDGET FOR LIWONDE SECONDARY SCHOOL IT LAB				
	COSTS		**ACTUAL**	
	COST MALAWI KWACHA	**CONVERT TO GBP**	**ACTUAL KWACHA**	**ACTUAL GBP**
EXCHANGE RATE GBP TO MALAWI KWACHA	**960**			
Classroom refurbishment				
Re-wiring materials	1,250,000.00	£1,302.08	1,153,192.25	£1,201.24
Labour (electrician)	250,000.00	£260.42	400,000.00	£416.67
Labour (carpenter)	350,000.00	£364.58	350,000.00	£364.58
Painting materials	200,000.00	£208.33	192,447.05	£200.47
Labour (painter)	150,000.00	£156.25	150,000.00	£156.25
Fabrication of desks and benches	700,000.00	£729.17	764,190.00	£796.03
Curtains	100,000.00	£104.17	123,750.00	£128.91
Signage	15,000.00	£15.63	11,200.00	£11.67
Builder (labour)	50,000.00	£52.08	50,000.00	£52.08
Ceiling fans	208,000.00	£216.67	206,700.00	£215.31
Whiteboard and stationary	150,000.00	£156.25	201,000.00	£209.38
Computer equipment				
Refurbished computers x 40	3,480,000.00	£3,625.00	3,480,000.00	£3,625.00
Refurbished laptop x 1	120,000.00	£125.00	90,000.00	£93.75
Projector ACER X113 MULTIMEDIA	400,000.00	£416.67	400,000.00	£416.67
Ceiling mount	20,000.00	£20.83	12,000.00	£12.50
Printer	366,000.00	£381.25	366,000.00	£381.25
Printer cartridge	90,000.00	£93.75	75,000.00	£78.13
25mtr VGA Cable	21,000.00	£21.88	15,000.00	£15.63
Wireless router			45,000.00	£46.88
Dongle and airtime			100,000.00	£104.17
CAT 5E and RJ45 connectors			172,500.00	£179.69
Project Management				
Hire of transport from Blantyre to LIWONDE to carry the materials	600,000.00	£625.00	700,000.00	£729.17
Transport from Blantyre to LIWONDE for the staff and	350,000.00	£364.58	386,766.59	£402.88
Transport for the Manager to oversee the project	300,000.00	£312.50	300,000.00	£312.50
Technical support				
6 monthly maintenance visits	500,000.00	£520.83	500,000.00	£520.83
Contingency used for:	500,000.00	£500.00	467,500.00	£486.98
Wireless router			45,000.00	£46.88
Dongle and airtime			100,000.00	£104.17
CAT 5E and RJ45 connectors			172,500.00	£179.69
Labour (electrician)			150,000.00	£156.25
TOTAL	10,170,000.00	£10,593.75	10,244,745.89	£10,671.61
Overspend		-£77.86		

Key variances

- The electrical costs were more than budgeted for, although we identified that the materials cost would be more due to the poor state of the existing cables, we thought we could keep the associated labour costs to a minimum.   In the end due to the amount of time the electrician spent on the job, his costs were more than we had budgeted for (£156) whereas we were under budget (-£100.84) for the cost of materials.

- We provided networking equipment (cables, router and dongle) and access to the Internet at a cost of £330.73. This included a one month subscription for the Internet. Although not budgeted for it was decided to provide the school with a short Internet subscription so they can demonstrate how it works to the students.

Conclusions

We are pleased to complete another project successfully, and in a very timely manner. Although there was an over spend of £77 we were able to squeeze more into the project by including the networking and access to the Internet.

We try to keep our IT Lab Project budgets to a similar amount and at the time we submitted this project we felt we needed to ensure we could properly provide the basic lab i.e. rewired, fabricated desks and benches, plus the equipment. Fortunately we did not need to use much of what we had budgeted as a contingent measure and so were able to use this for the networking related costs.

I mentioned in my last report we were hoping to develop a new country programme in Kenya and I am delighted that this has become a reality. We are now working with the Naivasha Technical Training Centre (NTTI) to supply computers to schools and individuals in the area of Naivasha.

We are also in the process of developing a three year strategy and have been working through a Theory of Change exercise to help us with this. This has been an exciting journey for us and I look forward to sharing the results of our progress with you at a later stage.

I'd like to take this opportunity to thank Fondation Eagle for their generous and continued support, we simply could not do what we do without their help.

With warm regards

Lucy Pollock
Overseas Operations Manager
IT Schools Africa
lucy@itschoolsafrica.org

Appendix A

Handover ceremony of IT Lab to Liwonde Secondary School (by Sabina Kulasinghe)

Liwonde community Day Seconday Schools is a Day School situated in Machinga District, Southern Religion of Malawi towards Lake Malawi. It does not have a boarding facility and a school hall for their assemblies like other schools Puteya, Ntonda and St Anthony. Students travel about 5 kilometers to get to school. Most of the students have bicycles to get to school. The students have now been introduced to learn ITC as a subject.

Thanks to Fondation Eagle some of the sudents claimed that they have not seen a computer physically nor what it does.

On Tuesday 28th February 2018, we officially handed over the lab to Liwonde Community Day Secondary School. The new lab is a major upgrade of the facilities at Liwonde CSS Secondary and to Machinga District.

In declaring the new lab opening, we were unfortunate that the Head Teacher and all the Education members were all in a very important meeting held in Mangochi at the lake. However, the two school deputy and all teachers and students were present. This was a blessed day as Liwonde is a very hot area and they had no rains for months. This day itself, they had the rain and it was very noisy due to steel iron sheets. Moreover, all went well in the end.

The ceremony went well as usual as the programme opened with cutting of Ribbon by the Deputy head teacher; entered the lab followed by a prayer by one of the teachers.

The Deputy Head teacher opened with his speech and thanked everyone for being present and an apology for the Head Teacher's absents and thanked CFMS for job well done. He mentioned that the school has changed. It's like it's not the same school any more. He was speechless and emotional and had tears in his eyes, he never thought this day would come true.

Donors and ITSA thank you; our own government could never do such a noble thing like this to any of its schools he said. CFMS had promised and it was fulfilled. CFMS finally stood by their words. We saw the work being done and then our own computers lab is here! "We are blessed". We have never seen such a beautiful computer lab as this one in our whole district area, and with student benched to sit on. The whole class clapped and sang a happy song.

He was speechless to thank IT School Africa and Fondation Eagle giving the chance to improve their school learning skills. On behalf of School and all authorities, he extended profound gratitude for the great gift.

He was so surprised and thanked CFMS team for completing the lab in a short time. He promised us that they will increase the enrolment of "girl child" studying computer lessons at their school and to make sure every child to learn computers and take the exams and pass with flying colours. Also, to do all they can in their power to maintain the status of the lab room and always make use of their lab to its fullest.

The Programme Manager of The CFMS Mrs S Kulasinghe gave a speech of introductory remarks of the IT Schools Africa and CFMS aims and goals. Also, encouraged the students

and teachers to make use of their IT lab to the fullest and remember the aim of the computer lab.

We ended with a signing song of signing of Lab Agreement between Liwonde CDSS School and CFMS.

The ceremony started at 11am ended at 1:30 pm.

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Appendix B

Head teacher's letter of acknowledgement of IT Lab –

Liwonde Community Day Secondary School

DATE: 1st MARCH, 2018

FROM: THE HEADTECHER, LIWONDE COMMUNITY DAY SECONDARY SCHOOL, P.O BOX 130, LIWONDE

TO: SHABINA KULASINGHE, COMPUTERS FO MALAWIAN SCHOOLS, P.O BOX BLANTYRE.

RE: ACKNOWLEDGEMENT LETTER FOR THE REFURBISHED COMPUTER LABORATORY

I write this letter to thank your good organization for considering our school as one of the beneficiaries of the refurbished computer laboratory project. We are really grateful for your intervention in providing us with this critical part of an education institution in this computer age. I am also writing this letter to acknowledge the receipt of the following items from your institution:

1. 41 computers for the Computer Lab and 1 computer for the head teacher's office
2. 1 HP printer with extra tonner and 5 reams of paper
3. 1 Hip Compaq NX 7300 laptop for the IT teacher
4. 1 White Board with 12 markers and eraser
5. 1 projector with a ceiling mount
6. 1 internet router
7. 1 network switch
8. 1 Airtel 3G WIFI Dongle with 10 GB valid for 30 days
9. Airtel Data units worth 7 GB with 24-hour validity
10. 13 Steel Long benches for the students
11. 1 office chair for the IT teacher
12. 2-year support in terms of IT equipment maintenance

Thank you so much for your continued support as we continue working together to ensure that no child is left without ICT knowledge.

Yours Faithfully

F.C Nangwale

HEAD TEACHER