Final report for Fondation Eagle
Chimphalika Community Day Secondary School IT Lab (FF 676)

Introduction

In September 2023 Fondation Eagle generously donated £20,406 to the ITSA Digital Trust for the installation of an IT lab at Chimphalika Community Day Secondary School in Chimoto, Dedza District, Malawi. Previously, the school of 436 students had only 1 working computer.
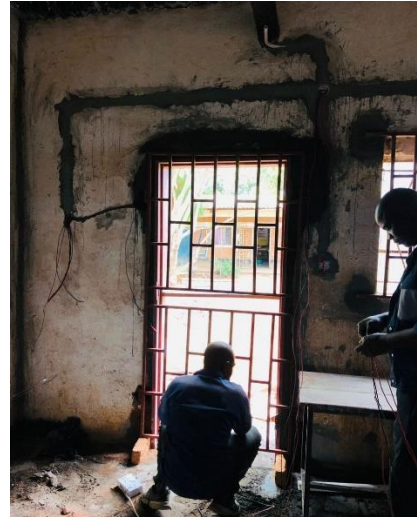

How we used the grant

Our project entailed renovating a classroom (seen in its original condition in the photo above), installing a 31-computer lab in the room and providing IT training to the school's teachers. The new IT lab will offer many hundreds of students the prospect of receiving an IT education for the first time, as well as enhancing teachers' IT skills, with additional beneficiaries in local schools and in the local community.

Renovating the classroom

Construction work in the classroom included removing some brick cupboards, the laying of trenches in the walls and floor to hide electric and computer trunking/cables, the replacement of the entrance door frame and door, the improvement of external brickwork and cement, replacement of some glass windows, and the attachment of metal security grids over the windows and doors.

The walls were plastered. The walls, ceiling, rafters, doors, security grids and some of the furniture were painted. Blinds were added to the windows. As with all the work undertaken, the team worked day and night over a period of a couple of weeks.

Fabrication of furniture

The students' desks and the teacher's desk were made to measure by our carpenters. For additional durability, they were secured to the floor and walls. Shelving was attached to the walls for the students' bags and personal belongings. A whiteboard was fixed to a wall.
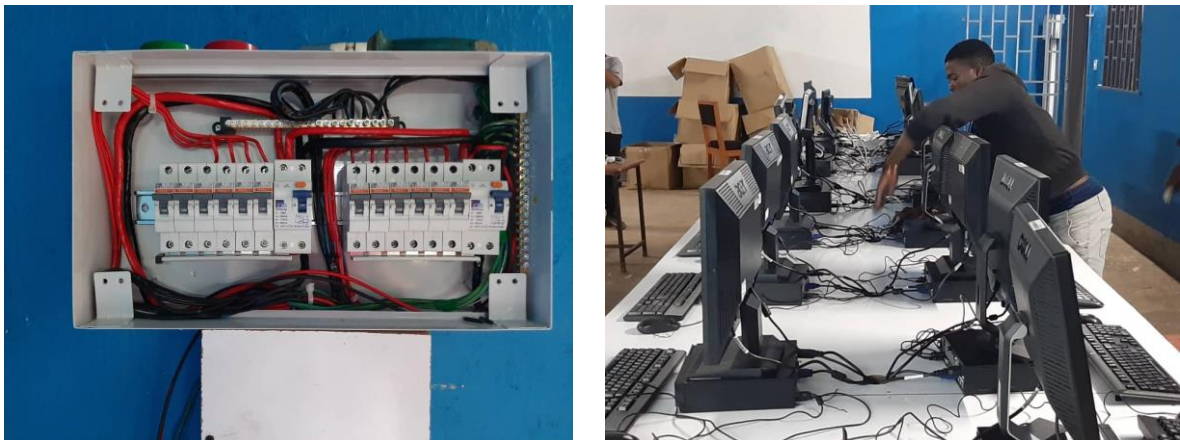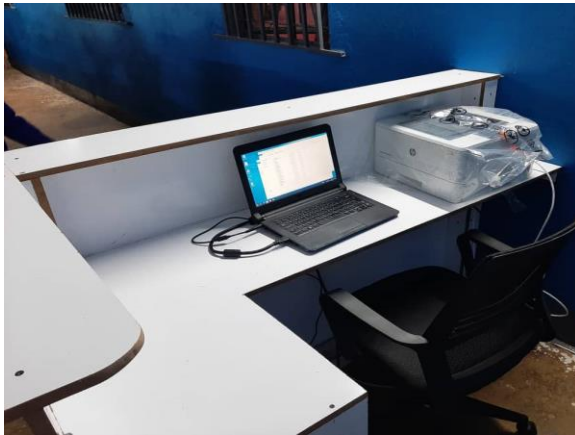
Electrical and IT work

A trench was dug in the earth outside the classroom to connect the room safely to the school's electricity supply. The security grids over the doors and walls were electrified for the protection of the lab overnight, with the wiring concealed within the walls. The trunking and wiring of the power supply for each computer were prepared and installed under the desks.
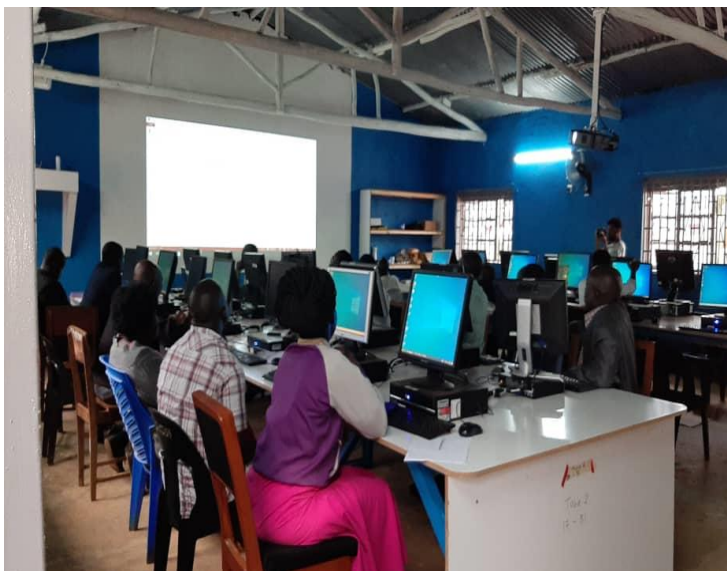

30 desktop computers with monitors, keyboards and mice were installed and networked. A laptop and printer were provided for the teacher. An overhead projector was set up and 6 electric fans were positioned on the walls. A fuse box was installed. WiFi and an internet connection were provided for use by all the computers.

Teacher training

16 of the 24 teachers were present and were given appropriate training to enable them to use the equipment effectively and to provide basic maintenance and repair.

The Finished IT lab

The photos below show the completed IT lab at the school. Please compare this with the photo of the room in its prior condition on page 1.
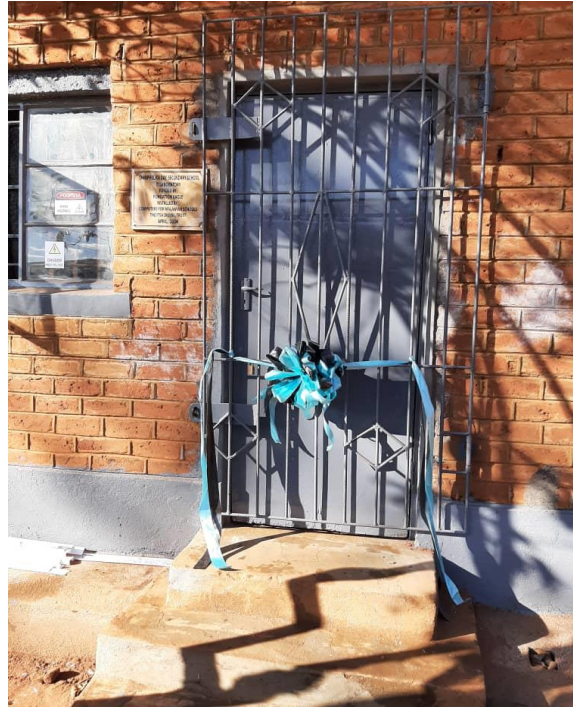
Opening Ceremony

On 24th May, 2024, our programme manager, Mrs Sabina Kulasinghe, the headteacher of the school (Mrs Patricia Mulande), two representatives from the Ministry of Education, the Parent Teacher Association, the district police, 3 village headmen, a member of parliament, representatives from Rotary Club Lilongwe, teachers and students took part in speeches and a celebration in the School Hall. *Zodiak TV* was present. Prayers were said, traditional dancing took place, a poem was read, a drama was performed, and one of the senior students made a speech in which he expressed the students' thanks for the new IT lab.

The celebration then moved to the new IT lab. Mrs Alfazema from the Ministry of Education and Mrs Kulasinghe from Computers for Malawian Schools (on behalf of the ITSA Digital Trust) cut the ribbon to signify the opening of the facility. Many compliments were paid about the lab and thanks were expressed to Fondation Eagle, CFMS and ITSA. The school's management promised to look after the lab, prioritize its use and offer access to neighbouring schools and the local community, with funds raised to go towards the upkeep of the lab.

External confirmation from an independent body that the project has been successfully completed.

REPORT ON HANDOVER OF COMPUTERS AT CHIMPHALIKA COMMUNITY DAY SECONDARY SCHOOL.

Rtn Trevor Kandoje (Director of the Projects Committee) and Rtn Graham Chipande (Incoming President) represented the Rotary Club of Lilongwe City Centre at the handover ceremony of the computers and newly refurbished computer lab at Chimphalika CDSS located in Chimoto Village, Dedza District.

The function was attended by various dignitaries and students including the Member of Parliament for the area Hon Chinkhondo, The Group Village Headman, representatives of the board of governors and government officials from the district education office and Computers for Malawi Schools.

Rtn Graham spoke on behalf of Rtn Michael Radcliffe the Chairman of the IT Schools for Africa and explained the role of IT Schools for Africa as a non-profit organization dedicated to providing access to quality IT education and resources across Africa. Kenya, Zimbabwe, Zambia and Malawi.

The donation which was made possible through resources from Foundation Eagle in the United Kingdom would further the organization's work in bridging the digital divide by offering training programs, and educational resources to underserved communities With a focus on empowering youth, including through local schools, like Chimphalika and the other stakeholders to deliver impactful programs that promote **economic development** and **social inclusion**.

He then spoke a little about the history of rotary International and its background including:

➢ Global Impact –(network of 1.2 million problem-solvers who come together to make positive, lasting change in communities at home and abroad.

➢ Rotary's work in areas including promoting peace, fighting disease, providing clean water, saving mothers and children, supporting education, and growing local economies.

➢ Service Projects initiated by members such as providing clean water and sanitation, supporting education, and improving health care, to address the world's most pressing humanitarian challenges.

➢ Youth Programs for young people, including Interact (for high school students), Rotaract (for young adults), and Rotary Youth Exchange (for cultural exchange).

➢ Leadership Development opportunities for students to develop leadership skills, engage in community service, and build lifelong friendships with like-minded individuals around the world.

The students were encouraged to consider starting their own interact club and using the computer lab to take advantage of the many benefits including:

- Networking Opportunities
- Global Citizenship
- Scholarships and Grants
- Community Engagement

Through Rotary's ethos of "Service Above Self," students were encouraged to make a difference in the world and leave a positive impact on society.

We witnessed the handover of 30 computers, 1 laptop and printer as well as internet access and WiFi in the newly renovated lab and Computers for schools conducted a briefing and question and answer session with local community representatives and faculty. Chimphalika serves a catchment area of 66,000 people, the project will serve as a catalyst and example to attract similar investments such as the MACRA rural labs project, and was one way of supporting e government.

We also toured the campus and appreciated other areas of need including;

Addition Accommodation for female students as School offers boarding facilities but many students parents cannot afford the cost of boarding facilities currently at MK150,000 per term. School started in 1981 and serves more than 400 students. Some students travel over 15 kilometers to reach the school and there are currently 151 boarding students.

We also learned that the Malawi Government through the Ministry of Education has recruited ICT teachers to be deployed to rural secondary schools and Chimphalika would be receiving a specialist teacher soon.

Rtn Trevor Kandoje
Director Projects

Rtn Graham Chipande
Incoming President

Financial report

The exchange rate for the budget was 1,200 Mk

ITEM	BUDGET		ACTUAL	
	KWACHA	**GBP**	**KWACHA**	**GBP**
ELECTRICAL MATERIALS	5,458,333.34	4,579.16	6,234,764.76	2,968.94
CARPENTY MATERIALS	1,555,488.50	1,296.24	2,230,390.00	1,062.09
PAINTER MATERIALS	570,396.50	518.54	1,167,270.00	555.84
CURTAINING	442,465.00	371.90	371,100.00	176.71
COMPUTER EQUIPMENT	8,354,483.72	7,594.99	19,635,275.00	9,350.13
TRANSPORTATION	2,250,000.00	2,045.45	3,825,200.00	1,821.52
PROJECT MANAGER	1,600,000.00	1,454.55	2,050,000.00	976.19
SECURITY	450,000.00	409.09	2,859,500.00	1,361.67
PHOTOGRAPHY	150,000.00	136.36	280,000.00	133.33
MONITORING & EVALUATION		2,000.00		2,000.00
TOTAL	**20,831,167.06**	**20,406.28**	**38,653,499.76**	**20,406.43**

Key variances

- The budget was developed prior to the devaluation of Malawi's Kwacha in November 2023, which saw it lose value by 44%. Hence the price of materials increased, including the computers. We managed to save costs in some places by paying cash. The school is in an isolated location with such poor roads that items are often transported by motorbike. Our team had to travel to the school more times than planned, with the first journey being so tough that the team drove for 10 hours, had to be rescued and had to be sent more fuel to continue on its journey. Extra fuel and accommodation costs were incurred. The computer equipment was made more expensive when the

Malawi Revenue Authority imposed additional tax on it, which CFMS could not claim back.

- Overall, the total overspend was £0.15.

Conclusion

We were delighted to be able to install this high-quality IT lab. The school appreciates the lab very much.

The project was somewhat delayed because of dangers in the Red Sea which caused our shipment of computers to be transported on a longer route around the Cape of Good Hope.

However, the finished IT lab more than compensates for these and other frustrations.

We look forward to helping more schools to improve their facilities and to providing a quality education for more students in Africa.

Thank you sincerely to Fondation Eagle for your generous support.

With warm regards

G. J. Newsome.

Geoffrey Newsome