Final Report for Fondation Eagle

Interim or Final report:	Final report
Donor name:	Fondation Eagle
Fondation Eagle reference:	FF690
Name of Charity:	The ITSA Digital Trust
Introduction: Please explain type of project and reason for request.	Installation of a 41-computer IT laboratory at Bua Community Day Secondary School in Mchimji, Malawi, to offer an IT education to students at the school. Previously, the school of 547 students (287 boys and 260 girls) had had no computers for teaching purposes.
Date of grant accepted:	December 2023
Amount:	£18,542
Conversion rate currency:	Budgeted conversion rate: 2,188.07 Malawian Kwacha (MWK) to 1 GBP.
Amount in local currency	Budgeted cost: 40,572,869 MWK
Name and exact location of the project:	Installation of IT lab at Bua Community Day Secondary School in Mchimji, Malawi
Period of Project:	Completed June 2025
Project beneficiaries:	Students and staff at Bua Community Day Secondary School

Details of the Project

Caption: the classroom and entrance to the school before our IT lab was installed

We are pleased to share our final report detailing the successful installation of the IT lab at Bua Community Day Secondary School (CDSS) in Mchimji Border, Malawi, made possible by your generous grant to the ITSA Digital Trust.

Summary of the project:

In brief, our project entailed renovating a classroom (seen in its original condition in the above photo) and installing an IT lab in its place. The work involved clearing the room, repairing the leaking roof, replacing broken windows, installing a secure door protector, reinforcing windows with steel mesh for security, repairing the teacher's cupboard, plastering walls, creating a secure separation from the adjacent library by bricking up and plastering a shared doorway, and cutting channels in the robust flooring in order to conceal wiring. A 40-computer IT lab with 1 laptop for the teacher was then installed in the room. In addition, basic IT training was provided for the school's teachers.

More detail about the project follows.

Caption: unloading of the first vehicle with materials for the refurbishment of the IT lab

Preparation, Painting and Curtaining

After the room had been cleared, a doorway was bricked up, the walls were prepared with plaster and white paint, the roof was varnished, and all the windows, doors and desk legs were painted. Curtains were hung in all the windows, to protect against the sun.

Fabrication of Furniture

Our carpenters custom-built durable desks for both the teacher and the students, which were then securely fixed to the floor and walls. Existing shelving was relocated to the school library, and the back shelving was repaired and painted for students' bags. We also constructed shelving for internet and network equipment at the rear of the room, along with a secure box for the overhead projector.

Electrical and IT work

The school's previous wiring was a 6mm cable, which was not suitable for our equipment. We therefore piped a 250-metre armoured cable from the school's main power supply into the ceilings of 4 classrooms to the IT lab, providing a dedicated and suitable electricity supply for the new IT lab.

For enhanced security at night, security grids on doors and windows were installed and were electrified, assisting the school's two night guards. Under-desk trucking and wiring were installed to provide power to the computers and Cat 6e internet connectivity was provided to each of the 40 student computers and the teacher's laptop.

A dedicated fuse box with circuit breakers for all computers was installed, along with Wi-Fi and internet connectivity, and six months of paid internet service.

It should be noted that throughout the renovation, students at the school showed great interest and eagerly anticipated the start of ICT classes.

Provision of IT Equipment

The IT lab was equipped with 40 complete desktop computer systems (PC, monitor, keyboard, mouse, power lead and graphic cable), a laptop and power cable for the teacher, an external hard drive, a printer, extra printer toner, reams of paper, a projector, a screen for the projector, a whiteboard, whiteboard markers, a board eraser and board liquid cleaner, and electric wall fans.

Teacher Training

During the installation of the lab, 3 of the school's ICT teachers assisted our technician, receiving hands-on training in RJ45 connector installation, basic computer maintenance, networking, troubleshooting, IP addressing, and resource sharing.

Some students also participated in setting up the monitors and computers.

The entire staff of 29 teachers received basic IT training before we formally handed the lab over to the school. The teachers were enthusiastic about the potential for the new lab to support their subject teaching through computer-based learning and research, and for exam preparation.

The Finished IT Laboratory

All the work and the teacher-training were completed by Sunday 1st June.

The completed IT lab, pictured below, represents a significant step forward for Bua CDSS, offering ICT education to hundreds of students for the first time. Other local schools and the wider community will also benefit.

Please compare the image of the new IT lab, compared with the room as it was at the start of the project (on page 2 of this report)
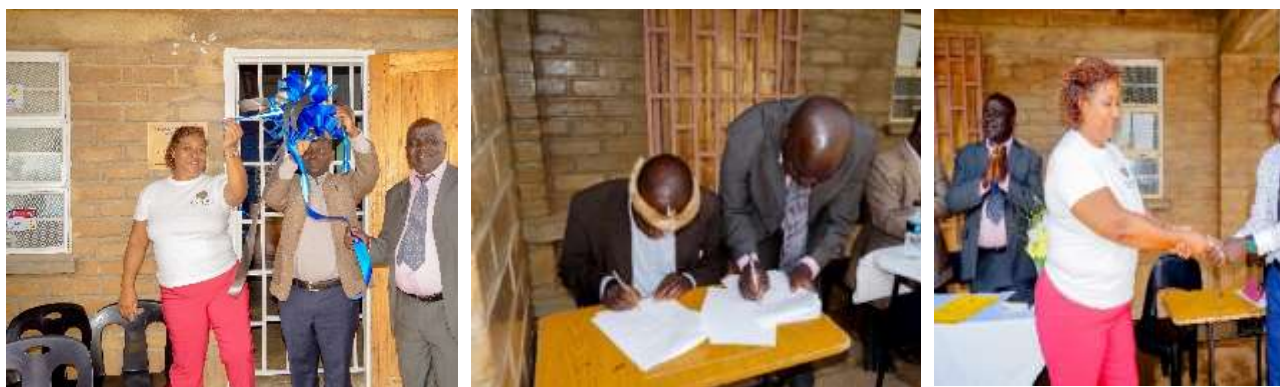
Caption: the new IT laboratory at Bua Community Day Secondary School

Opening Ceremony

On 2nd June, 2025, the formal opening ceremony was attended by: our programme manager in Malawi, Mrs Sabina Kulasinghe, a technician Chitemwa Tembo, the headteacher of the school Mr. Isaiah Banda, a representative of the Parent Teacher Association (Maria B Nyasulu), a representative of the Mothers Group (Mrs. Tereza Lipenga), the Head Chief of the Village (Frank Chibwana), the Chief Education Officer (Mr Dennis Chikwakwa Mwale), the Board of Governors (BOG) Mr Thengoliweta Chilamba, BOG Mrs Vester Chang'ombe, the Chair of the Mchinji District Education Network (CISE Malawi) Mr Davis Damson, the Chief Education Officer of Mchinji DEM Mr. Danols Mwale, all teachers and staff, all open and day students.

Speeches were made, and students read poems, performed drama, danced and sang. The whole ceremony was extremely joyful.

The ceremony ended with ribbon cutting. The officials then entered the room and admired the IT lab. An agreement was signed and the key to the IT lab was handed over to the school's principal IT teacher.

Detailed budget and expenditure summary

Please find attached a detailed breakdown of the project costs, comparing the budgeted amounts from 2023 with the actual expenditures incurred in 2025.

	BUDGETED SPEND		ACTUAL SPEND		OVER/(UNDER) SPEND	
	MALAWI KWACHA	GBP	MALAWI KWACHA	GBP	MALAWI KWACHA	GBP
EXCHANGE RATE		2,188.07		2,607.43		2,607.43
ELECTRICAL	6,701,052.83	£3,062.54	10,591,642.00	£4,062.10	£3,890,589.17	£1,492.12
CARPENTRY	2,418,080.49	£1,105.12	3,255,250.00	£1,248.45	£837,169.51	£321.07
CURTAINING	443,619.50	£202.74	450,000.00	£172.58	£6,380.50	£2.45
BUILDING	799,750.00	£365.50	627,250.00	£240.56	-£172,500.00	-£66.16
PAINTING	937,962.01	£428.67	1,663,000.00	£637.79	£725,037.99	£278.07
COMPUTER EQUIPMENT	15,373,250.00	£7,025.94	19,931,501.00	£7,644.12	£4,558,251.00	£1,748.18
EQUIPMENT	4,412,263.00	£2,016.51	1,098,300.00	£421.22	-£3,313,963.00	-£1,270.97
TRANSPORTATION	5,200,000.00	£2,376.52	6,651,367.00	£2,550.93	£1,451,367.00	£556.63
CEREMONY	150,000.00	£68.55	165,000.00	£63.28	£15,000.00	£5.75
WELDING WORKS	450,000.00	£205.66	290,000.00	£111.22	-£160,000.00	-£61.36
MONITORING AND EVALUATION	3,686,891.00	£1,685.00	4,393,520.00	£1,685.00	£706,629.00	£271.01
TOTAL	40,572,868.83	£18,542.77	49,116,830.00	£18,837.26	8,543,961.17	£3,276.77

Funds received: £18,542

Overspend: 8,543,961.17 MWK, £3,276.77

Comments on Key Variances

- The budget was developed prior to yet another devaluation of the Malawi Kwacha, which occurred before the project was completed and caused prices to rise.
- Labour costs have risen since the budget was created. In addition, the work by the builders, painters and electricians was more challenging than expected.
- The school is near the Zambia border, where everything is more expensive, including food, transport and accommodation. The costs were therefore underestimated. Nevertheless, materials were sourced from the most competitively-priced suppliers and some items were pre-ordered.

Letter of thanks from the school's headteacher:

2nd June, 2025

Bua Community Day Sec School
Private Bag 33
Mchinji

BUA CDSS
Lack of knowledge is darker than night

Headteacher:
I.W. Banda
0999 397 872

To: The Manager
Computers for Malawian Schools
P.O. Box 2835
Blantyre

RE: ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF RECEIVING A DONATION OF AN IT LAB AT BUA CDSS

With great pleasure and appreciation, I would like to acknowledge that Bua CDSS has officially received a donation of an IT Lab from your organisation; Computers for Malawian Schools on this day; **2nd June, 2025.** The installation process of this IT Lab started on 26th May, 2025.

The scope of the donation is as follows;

- 40 refurbished computers
- One teacher laptop
- A white board and accessories
- A digital projector
- Teachers chair and built on desk for students
- New HP laser printer
- Classroom refurbishment which include re-wiring, re-decoration and new built-in desks for students
- Ceiling fans
- Internet, networking and internet units for 6 months
- Technical support for 1 year

We are very grateful for this donation and we believe that it will play a big role in ensuring effective teaching and learning to our students.

Yours faithfully HEADTEACHER
BUA CDSS

I.W. Banda   0 2 JUN 2025

PRIVATE BAG 33
MCHINJI

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

ROTARY CLUB OF LIMBE
P O Box 6079
LIMBE
MALAWI

ROTARY CLUB OF LIMBE

District - 9210
Club No - 17509

9ᵗʰ June 2025

The Programme Manager
Computers for Malawian School &
ITSA Digital Trust
Unit 8, Mead Road Industrial Estate
Cheltenham, Gloucestershire GL537EF
United Kingdom

Dear Sir/Madam

REPORT ON COMMISSIONING OF COMPUTER LABORATORY PROJECT
BUA COMMUNITY DAY SECONDARY SCHOOL, MCHINJI

We, Rotary Club of Limbe, Malawi (District 9210) wish to congratulate CFMS on successful completion and delivery of the Computer Laboratory to Bua Community Secondary School, Mchinji on 2ⁿᵈ June 2025. The school is situated approx. 500 Kms from CFMS Offices in Blantyre.

The donation to the school comprised of complete refurbishment of the Lab building to suitable condition with protective windows, furniture and infrastructure, electrical reticulation to suit the power requirements, 40 Desktop Computers, 1 Laptop, Projector with a Screen, Network reticulation and configuration, Wi-Fi connectivity for six months consumption. In addition, suitable Teacher Training was conducted for effective use of the facility.

This letter serves as an independent Report to authenticate that as Rotary Club of Limbe, we monitored the implementation and delivery of the facility. Due to the other commitments of the Club, the distance and Rotary District 9210 Conference, we could not attend the formal handover ceremony. We are satisfied that the project was completed and handed over to the school. We have evidence to confirm that the handover was duly appreciated and endorsed by the officials of the Ministry of Education, Group Village Headman and School Board of Governance.

The impact of this project is profound and has left an indelible impact on the school, community and education sector at large. As Rotary Club of Limbe, we are honored to have seen this project from inception to the completion and monitored the progress which was diligently carried out by CFMS.

Should you require any further information on this project or Rotary Club of Limbe, do no hesitate to contact the undersigned.

Yours sincerely

Maziko Phiri
President Elect 2025-26
+265 886365613

Conclusion

We were delighted to be able to achieve in full the objective that we stated in the File Form by installing this high-quality IT laboratory at Bua Community Day Secondary School.

The project was perhaps our most challenging to date. It was considerably delayed because of problems in Malawi such as ill health requiring major surgery, a lack of computer stock which required ITSA to send another shipment of computers to Malawi, ongoing dangers in the Red Sea which caused our shipments of computers to be transported on a longer route around the Cape of Good Hope, a fuel crisis, and regular economic crises including another devaluation of the Kwacha.

However, the school and local community appreciate the new IT facilities very much. The school already has more students (547 day students and 200 open students), so that even more students will benefit from the use of the lab in the years ahead. This happy fact convinces us that the finished IT lab more than compensates for the delays and frustrations.

Thank you sincerely to Fondation Eagle for your patience and for your generous support.

With warm regards

G. J. Newsome.

Geoffrey Newsome, Chief Executive
2nd July, 2025