

## The Lord Provost's Malawi Projects

### Report from the ACCESS IT Team, 2011.

#### Introduction

Between the 10th and 23rd of September, 2011, volunteers from ACCESS working for the Lord Provost's Projects for Malawi spent time working in and around Malawi's capital city, Lilongwe, on a variety of IT related tasks. Sammy Birnie, Maria Quintas Zon, Hilary Wood and Ian Black, working in conjunction with Gillian Walsh from the Lord Provost's and International Office and Project Director, Professor Brian Kelly, successfully installed computers, printers and carried out training on various IT applications.

In excess of 140 computers and printers were installed and a number repaired in over 20 locations, with a further 40 computers, mobile phones/Blackberrys delivered to other training establishments.

Training courses were run for 87 staff, some of 3 day duration, covering;

- Hardware installation, fault finding and repair
- Network theory and troubleshooting
- Advanced MS Office and Outlook applications
- Database construction, management and administration
- Geographical Information Systems.



Visits were made by the IT team to other charitable organisations within the Lilongwe area and those included Kafulu Girls Foundation and Landirani Trust, to establish if the Lord Provost's Projects could provide assistance in terms of IT provision.

The prevailing perception of the IT team was that all the organisations visited in Malawi this year were looking after the computers provided in previous years, and within the constraints of the locations where they were deployed, the computers were being used well for the purposes they were intended.

Specific details of the work undertaken and the sites visited this year are as follows;

#### Lilongwe City Assembly

Assistance was provided to repair computer hardware previously supplied to the City Assembly for training purposes. An additional training suite was set up and 14 PCs installed and configured on the local network for Outlook training. The IT Team also assisted with the resolution of a network fault which had impacted on the set up of the training suite.

During a number of visits to Lilongwe City Assembly it was noted that the local staff on site were far more engaged with the various Lord Provost's projects. Assistance was provided at every opportunity including the provision of transport to and from sites within the city and beyond.

Since their return from Malawi, Glasgow IT staff have made their time available to provide assistance relating to the training suite PCs and continue to support the City Assembly staff via e-mail.

### Visits to Schools

Annual visits are undertaken to schools which have received PCs over preceding years. This allows an audit of the hardware donated and a chance to repair or replace computers which have developed faults since the last visit.

Schools visited this year included, Chimutu, Lilongwe LEA, Lilongwe Demonstration, Kafulu, Mlodza, Chinsapo and Mvunguti.

A number of PCs and printers were repaired on site or replaced, and the general condition of the rooms used for computer training was noted.

The general consensus was that schools were looking after their computers far better than at previous visits with some schools providing bespoke covers for monitors, base units and keyboards.



### Kafulu Girls Foundation

Kafulu Girls Foundation is a charity set up by a teacher at Kafulu School, Foster Phiri, to reach out to girls and young women in local communities to encourage them, where possible, to remain in education. Five laptop computers were delivered to the charity. These will allow the group of 37 volunteers to continue outreach work in educating vulnerable girls and young women on the advantages of remaining in education, rather than dropping out of school aged 13 or 14 years, often to get married. This has already improved the life opportunities of young women in the region.

### Wenela Training Centre

Wenela Training Centre is a Teacher Development Centre which was established by Glasgow City Council in 2006 and is now run by Lilongwe City Assembly. Training was requested for 51 teachers over a period of 3 days on advanced topics within MS Word, Excel and Powerpoint. The training was designed for teachers at a senior level to assist with;



- Preparation of exam papers
- Construction of duty rotas
- Budgeting
- Presentations to other staff and pupils

Prior to delivery of the first training course the PCs provided 2 years previously were refreshed with 19 new computers which were installed, networked and configured for network printing.

Over a 3 day period a total of 51 teachers attended training courses run by Hilary Wood, assisted by Thokozani Ntukula, a

local trainer specifically employed to work at the centre. Trainees attending presented with varying levels of proficiency, from those comfortable using the MS Office suite to those with little or no computer experience.

During the first day of training the Chief Executive Officer of Lilongwe City Assembly, Kelvin Mmangisa, and the Director of Administration, Dyton Milanzi visited the training centre and expressed their gratitude for the training and the provision of the computer hardware on which it was based.

### **MS Outlook Training**

At the request of the Lilongwe City Assembly a training course was delivered in the use of MS Outlook e-mail. The course was delivered by Hilary Wood to 21 directors and senior managers from the Assembly on 14 PCs installed in the Assembly committee room and configured with assistance from the Glasgow IT Team.

The course content included;

- Outlook folders and advanced toolbar
- Formatting of message text
- Message options
- Organising mail
- Non Mail activities including Calendar and Task Lists.

Staff attending the session were familiar with computers and receptive to the training. This intensive training course will allow Assembly personnel to make full use of the functionality available in Outlook and assist them in the inter-office and external communications. The course concluded with an unexpected round of applause for the trainer.



### **MS ACCESS Database Training**

Training was requested for the City Assembly staff who maintain and administer the database of commercial and domestic rates for the administrative area of Lilongwe.

Staff involved had a basic knowledge on MS Access and Visual Basic Coding.

Maria Quintas Zon delivered a training course to the Assembly IT Department on the following topics relating to Microsoft Access;



- Conversion of MS Access 97 to 2003
- Debugging of Visual Basic code
- Guidance on writing useful code
- Editing and changing forms
- Creation of desktop icons to reference database on server.

The training was successful with the database being converted as required. Some topics around the security of the database were not covered as completely as Maria would have liked due to the limited time available, however, staff were provided with guidance and instruction on how to complete the remainder of the work successfully.

It is envisaged that staff at the City Assembly will be able to take advantage of the training and functionality available, to provide a better service in collection of business and domestic rates within the Lilongwe area.

### **Training in desktop repair and configuration.**

At the request of Lilongwe City Assembly a one day training course was delivered by Sammy Birnie on desktop pc repair, and configuration.

Seven IT staff attended the course. Three from Wenela Training and Development Centre, 3 from the computer training unit at Dzaleka Refugee Camp and a member of staff from the Lilongwe City Assembly.

Preparations for the course included the break down and labelling of all parts of the two models of desktop computer supplied by the Glasgow team, laid out for the trainees to assemble and configure.



Once familiar with the PC build the trainees were instructed in;

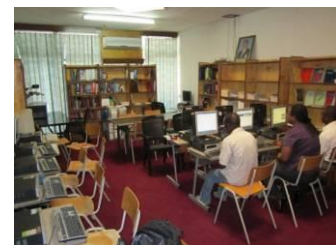
- PC troubleshooting
- Configuration of network adapters
- Configuration of ip address
- Configuration of network printers
- Basic network troubleshooting

The training was well received by all attendees and generated requests for additional spares to be supplied now that the trainees had gained the knowledge to repair known faulty units.

### **Kamuzu Central Hospital**

IT staff visited various locations within Kamuzu Central Hospital to assess the condition of computer hardware delivered in previous years. These included;

- Interdenominational Pastoral Care Centre – Of 11 PCs, one was replaced and 2 printers required attention.
- Hospital Library – This is used by doctors to access the internet for medical research and now has 14 PCs, 12 of which have internet access. Six PCs were replaced due to faults or upgrade. Medical reference books and journals delivered on behalf of the Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons of Glasgow were immediately catalogued and placed on shelves.



- Prosthetics/Orthotics Clinic/Workshop - Funded jointly by the Lord Provost's Malawi Fund and the charity, "500 Miles", and built last year by Glasgow City Building staff to replace a smaller unit, has treated 553 patients in the last twelve months. The unit is managed by Joanna Cole-Hamilton (pictured) and is staffed by 7 local technicians. In the last year 148 prostheses were manufactured and fitted to patients who had lost limbs, and 323 orthotic devices were constructed





and fitted to assist the mobility of patients. An additional PC and printer were supplied to the clinic as well as advice and additional hardware was provided to assist with backup of records.



- Operating Theatre Offices - One additional PC was installed and a keyboard replaced. Cabling had been installed by local staff to provide internet access but this could be improved by being better planned and structured installation.
- Intensive Care Unit (ICU) - The PC at the nurses station had been well looked after and an additional unit was installed for record keeping.
- Paediatric High Dependency Unit (HDU) - 2 PCs were replaced in the offices of the physicians. These devices are used for record keeping and one of which had internet access and allowed staff to monitor developments in Paediatric HDU from the office.



- At the request of the Hospital Director, Dr. Noor Alide, a computer lab was set up in an unused staff canteen. This room had been empty for some time and required some attention. This was very quickly and efficiently provided by local staff organised by the Deputy Head of the Physiotherapy Department, Herbson Singo. Desks were provided and 12 PCs were installed and tested with the intention of providing a training suite for all hospital staff.

Computers and printers had been well cared for in all areas. Local staff had extended cabling to the ICU, Theatre and HDU to allow internet access.

### **Dae Yang Luke Hospital**

IT staff visited Dae Yang Luke Hospital to assess the condition of 26 computers and cabling installed at the Nursing College by the Glasgow IT team the previous year. Only 2 PCs from the Nursing College and 3 from the remainder of the hospital had caused any problems over the year. IT staff were able to re-image the hard drive on one Nursing College machine but the 3 from the hospital were beyond repair.

The server installed in the college had suffered from a power supply failure and was no longer operational, whilst the cabling cabinet installed in the office on the first floor had been relocated to an IT office on the ground floor. The hardware had been well looked after and the staff were actively engaged in improving their IT estate.



### **Dzaleka Refugee Camp IT Facility**

Members of the IT team visited the Dzaleka Refugee Camp education facility run on behalf of UNHCR by the Jesuit Refugee Service and headed by Sister Michelle Carter. The IT team arrived at the camp during a power outage and none of the computers could be checked. Local IT staff confirmed that all machines were working normally and the facility's equipment appeared to be well looked after. Five IT training courses are being conducted at the facility each day for various refugee groups and for staff development.

A plan to install 12 computers in a local school just outside of the camp, at the request of the Sister Michelle, could not be completed. Funding could not be secured to provide an electricity supply to the school.

## Dedza

Two members of the IT Team spent 3 days working in the town of Dedza approximately one and half hours driving distance from their base in Lilongwe.

On arrival at Dedza, Sammy Birnie and Maria Quintas Zon were met by the District Commissioner and thanked for the work completed in previous years.

Five local staff had been selected to receive training on, and to run, a Geographical Information System for the District. During an intensive 3 day period Maria successfully trained local staff to a reasonable standard in;

- Basic GIS theory and set up
- Map import
- Overlays of transport, schools and hospitals
- Definition of boundaries
- Interpretation of GIS information
- Development of GIS systems.



During his 3 days in Dedza, Sammy Birnie worked with local IT Manager, Raymond Nkonya, to install;

- 5 training PCs and hub in the local hospital, and connected them to the hospital network.
- 5 PCs in the Old Boys Secondary School.
- 4 training PCs in the BOMA District Assembly buildings
- 2 training PCs in the Department of Agriculture buildings
- 2 PCs for training in the Department of Education
- 1 training PC in each of Registrars, Rural Housing Department, BOMA Secretariat and Fisheries Departments.



All PCs installed were marked with permanent markers to allow future audit of the PC estate.

In addition to the above installations 17 PCs and 2 printers were installed by Sammy and Maria in the training room at the District Assembly where the PCs had been destroyed by surges in the local power supply.

Working with Ray Nkonya, Sammy was also able to repair 7 out of 13 PCs from previous installations which had been reported as faulty. Six other machines with power supply faults could not be repaired as all of the spare parts shipped to Dedza had been utilised.

September, 2011  
BK/IB/GW