

# **Kenya School Visit M&E Report 2009**

**Schools visited: 56 (target= 80)**

## **Introduction**

Kenya was the quickest of the Hubs to engage with the M&E process in a meaningful way. Athman, the M&E Officer, was important in helping to shape the reporting format, and raised the bar for the entire system from the start. The M&E volunteer team in Kenya was very hard-working, and the reporting structure in Kenya was quite robust as a result. Unfortunately the reports slowed down significantly in the summer, and tapered off completely after the middle of the year. While further school visits were undertaken, no reports were filed and the additional schools have not been included. All visits were conducted between February and August 2009.

## **1. Student Interviews**

The responses in this field are particularly interesting since the questions were open-ended and thus capture primary attitudes. The student interviews were generally very positive, with students in 32 schools emphasising that they liked using technology in the classroom and particularly focusing on how it will help them secure better futures. Students in eight schools responded positively to Linux, while citing a preference for Windows in only one. However, the Kenya Hub is very active in promoting Linux, and given the high number of schools opting for Windows these reports are unlikely to be wholly representative. In one school students reported that they had no computer teacher. However, the primary difficulty in Kenya from a student perspective seems to be congestion in the Learning Centres. In 11 schools students cited too few computers as being a major obstacle. In five schools students had been given no access to computers whatsoever which is extremely disappointing and needs to be addressed.

## 2. Teacher Interviews.

Teacher responses were very interesting in that 23 schools stressed the need for better training support, particularly in maintenance and using Linux. Teachers in nine schools requested more computers, while four highlighted the need for more educational software and training materials. One very important request was for additional facilities and software to enable equal access in a school for mentally disabled children. Teachers in two schools had issues with Camara's fulfilment in delivering support. Two teachers reported liking Linux, whereas four stressed their dislike for the operating system, emphasising that it was not examinable on the syllabus in Kenya. Five schools requested more regular visits and support, while two schools cited power problems as being a major cause for concern. It is important to stress that these issues are probably representative of a large proportion of schools, and reliance on petrol generators tends to undermine the educational impact of Camara's work.

## 3. Computers

All computers were received between 2005 and 2009.

Total Number of computers received	3,682
Computers accounted for	938 (25%)
Mean lab size	16.75 computers
Median lab size	15 computers
Computers broken	184 (20%)
Computers missing	32 (3.5%)
Computers working	695 (76%) <sup>1</sup>
Approximate total number of students	14,817
Mean number of students per school	296.34
Median number of students per school	197
Median number of students per computer	13 <sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Of 911 computers. There is an anomaly of 27 computers (2.9%).

<sup>2</sup> Calculated by dividing the median number of computers per school by the median number of students.

Camara Kenya split from its local partner in late 2008 because the partner wanted to draw a profit from selling computers to schools. As a result, records of where the computers went prior to 2009 are quite intermittent. Furthermore, many of the 2009 schools had received computers too recently to justify a meaningful monitoring visit. While the vast majority of computers probably went to schools throughout the period, there was a major shortfall in terms of recording this information centrally. The percentage of computers accounted for is far too low and needs to be a major priority for the Hub. The number of computers broken is relatively high, given that most of the schools visited received their computers since the start of 2007. By contrast, the proportion of computers missing from schools is very low and the Hub is to be commended in this respect.

The average lab size is considerably lower than the 25 recommended by Camara. Given that this is the case in most of the countries, there is a strong case for revisiting this guideline. In Kenya the Camara schools have low student numbers, which probably makes purchasing 25 computers prohibitive. There is possibly some cause for investigating the potential for capping the minimum number of computers at 15, and providing training to teachers in splitting classes to ensure one computer per student. While the number of computers shown in schools is disappointing, the longevity of the machines is certainly positive.

#### 4. Reception dates of schools visited

Year	Number of Schools
2009	9 (18.8%) <sup>3</sup>
2008	7 (14.6%)
2007	22 (45.8%)
2006	9 (18.8%)
2005	1 (2%)

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<sup>3</sup> Of 48 schools. Teachers in 8 schools could not remember the reception date.

## 5. Year-on-year computer functionality

	PCs received	PCs working	PCs broken	PCs missing
<b>2009</b>	179	176 (98.3%)	3 (1.7%)	0
<b>2008</b>	109	91 (83.4%)	14 (12.8%)	2 (1.8%)
<b>2007</b>	292	203 (69.5%)	76 (26%)	13 (4.5%)
<b>2006</b>	198	129 (65.2%)	57 (28.8%)	12 (6.1%)
<b>2005</b>	35	22 (62.9%)	10 (28.6%)	3 (8.6%)
<b>Totals</b>	<b>813</b>	<b>621 (76.4%)</b>	<b>160 (19.7%)</b>	<b>30 (4.8%)</b>

## 6. The Learning Centres

Schools in towns	29 (54.7%) <sup>4</sup>
Schools in town outskirts	17 (32.1%)
Rural or remote schools	7 (13.2%)
Muslim-only schools	4 (7.1%)
Christian-only schools	3 (5.4%)
Mixed religion schools	49 (87.5%)
Boys' schools	9 (16.1%)
Girls' schools	7 (12.5%)
Mixed gender schools	40 (71.4%)

Profiling the schools and Learning Centres is complicated because of the subjectivity of many of the evaluations. However, the M&E Officer in Kenya proved to be highly competent and reliable, and his assessments probably provide a very good indication of the reality of the project. The bias towards urban and suburban schools is marked. Accessible schools are much easier to deliver computers to, and the Learning Centres are easier to maintain

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<sup>4</sup> Of 53 schools (The geographical location was not clear in the case of three schools.)

once established. Teachers are more likely to attend training, and crucially urban schools are more likely to have electricity, rather than having to rely on costly petrol generators.

The high proportion of schools that are non-discriminatory in terms of religion and gender is extremely positive. Furthermore, there is a very equitable balance between those small numbers of schools that do discriminate, and the Hub is to be commended in this respect. Interestingly 25 of the schools had changed the operating system (OS) of at least some of their computers to Windows. In several cases this was only to evaluate which system they preferred, and this criticism should be welcomed. Given the primacy of Windows and the fact that it is what most teachers are familiar with, it is clear that Camara needs to be either actively pro-choice in terms of its OS, or be far more systematic in providing basic Linux training to teachers as a prerequisite to receiving computers.

The M&E Officer described all of the schools as being either average or below average in terms of resources. While the measure is entirely subjective, his assessments were cross-checked in a number of instances and proved to be reasonably accurate. This is positive insofar as Camara's services are not just being solicited by the best-positioned schools. Virtually all of the schools charge students to use the computers, either directly or by incorporating charges into existing school fees. By and large the charges are reasonably affordable, though it is vital to include a clause in the school contract that prohibits individual children being precluded from accessing the Learning Centre because their parents have not paid. Another major concern is the massive discrepancies that schools are charging students for what is presumably the same service. Fees vary from €1.16 per annum to €56 per annum. There is a patent need to set a threshold, and include a budgeting component in the Learning Centre Management Module.

## 7. Usage

<b>Frequency of access</b>	<b>Number of schools</b>
Daily	6 (11.8%) <sup>5</sup>
4 times a week	4 (7.8%)
3 times a week	11 (21.6%)
Twice a week	15 (29.4%)
Once a week	10 (19.6%)
Never	5 (9.8%)

The reported frequency of student access to the Learning Centres is very high. Unfortunately there is very little evidence against which to cross-check teacher responses, so the reports are currently unverified. For 2010 it will be a priority to further examine the level of student access. In terms of prolonging the longevity of Learning Centres there are definite issues around ensuring and documenting the continued usage of surge protectors and dust covers for computers.

January 2010

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<sup>5</sup> Of 51 schools. There was no data for five of the schools.