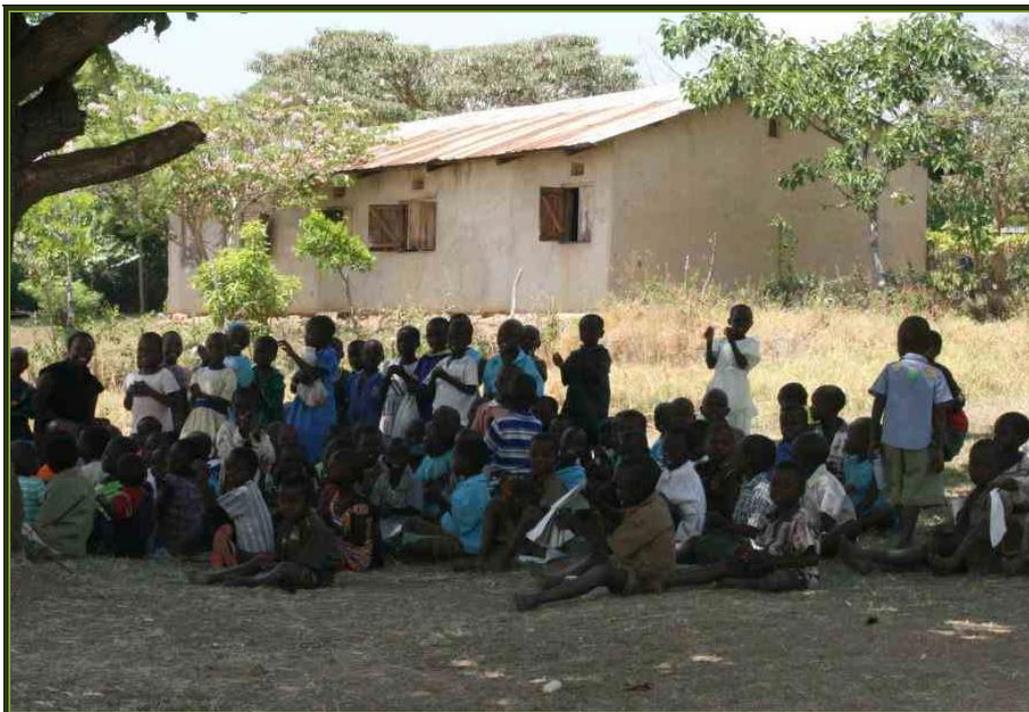Note from Jenny Allen at PONT (14/9/13) – "I'm happy to say that just after we sent you the report, we heard from the British Council in Uganda that a deal has been finalised with Airtel to connect some of the IT Hubs under Project Badiliko to the internet for 3 years. The Mbale Hub will be one of these."

Final Report on:
IT Hub for Schools in Mbale, Uganda

- for The British and Foreign Schools Society -
August 2013

Contents

Part 1: Project Summary

Project title: IT Hub for Schools in Mbale, Uganda

Main project aim: To develop an IT Hub in Mbale region, eastern Uganda, to be used by schools (teachers then pupils) and then the wider community for the purposes of educational and IT skills development.

Project support partners: The British and Foreign Schools Society; British Council Uganda- working with Microsoft; PONT UK charity, and the Mbale District Government.

Proposed Outputs	Achieved Outputs
Install an IT hub within the District Education Office in Mbale (with 2 servers and 20 computer user units).	IT hub (with 2 servers and 20 computer units) successfully installed and a Hub Administrator trained by the British Council in Nairobi, in January 2012.
Provide training in IT skills to teachers in Mbale (that they can then pass on to their pupils) - initial target of 200 teachers agreed with the British Council Uganda.	200 teachers trained in basic computer programmes (160 teachers and 40 headteachers). Headteachers also trained in Global Citizenship, using the context of their PONT school links with Wales.
Support pupils and the wider community to develop their computer literacy skills	Teachers are using their newly acquired skills to teach pupils in their schools (see Appendix 1: "Testimonies from hub trainees").
Facilitate communication of the school links between Wales and Mbale, through access to the internet	Not yet achieved - awaiting finalisation of internet provision from British Council, Uganda.

Part 2: Background and Initiation of the Project

PONT (Partnership Overseas Networking Trust) is a community link charity between Rhondda Cynon Taf in South Wales and the Mbale region of Eastern Uganda. The link is dedicated to tackling poverty in Mbale through joint partnerships between local charities/NGOs and District Government, supported by international donor organisations and committed volunteers in Wales. Cooperation within these partnerships has led to initiatives in a number of areas, including education, health, livelihoods and environmental improvements.

Uganda is ranked 161 out of 186 countries on the UN Human Development Index due to its low life expectancy and high rates of disease, amongst other indicators of poverty. The patterns of poverty within the Mbale region are reflective of the patterns throughout Uganda. This project was set up to tackle the development goal of education and aims to contribute to the continual improvement of the education system in the Mbale region.

PONT has an Education Committee/Team whose activities mainly consist of supporting links between schools in Rhondda Cynon Taf and partner schools in Mbale. There are currently 65 such links, allowing for information, values, teaching methods and teaching resources to flow between the Welsh and Ugandan partner schools. More tangible projects are also pursued, such as the formation of school libraries, installation of solar panels in Mbale schools (to supply electricity, particularly for lighting) and the building of an accommodation block for girl boarding pupils.

It is well recognised that a lack of 'e-literacy' (proficiency in ICT) is a stumbling block in the processes of educational development at personal, regional and national levels in Uganda. At an individual level the sharing of information that ICT skills can bring is useful to the education and employability of the youth, and also the professional development of teachers and other professionals. On a regional level, ICT skills can be used by education authorities for the development of up-to-date teaching resources and curriculums. Improvements on both these levels are ultimately reflected in better educational attainment for all.

Most government schools in Mbale lack any access to ICT/ computer facilities. This limits educational opportunities and hampers the confidence of teachers and pupils when considering further education and work opportunities. There are some internet cafes in Mbale town, but these can be too expensive for teachers and pupils to use and they will often lack the skills to approach the use of a computer.

In 2011 Microsoft entered into a partnership with the British Council to build digital hubs for schools and community centres across a number of African countries – Project Badiliko (see some details below). We were delighted that Mbale was selected as one of the locations in Uganda for an IT Hub to be provided, in recognition of the strong connections developed by the PONT- Mbale school links. The British Council and Microsoft were able

to provide half of the funds needed to set up an IT Hub in Mbale but asked PONT to find the other half - which was kindly provided by the British and Foreign Schools Society.

Project Badiliko: Microsoft and British Council – extract from:
http://www.britishcouncil.org/partnerships/project-badiliko-microsoft-british-council

Our objective:

To improve access and quality in education, training, and technology around the world. Project Badiliko will provide teachers and learners across Africa with the 21st Century skills they need to live and work in a global economy.

Our strategy:

Badiliko is the first project in a strategic alliance between the British Council and Microsoft, which started in 2011, that builds on our organisations' complementary expertise in education, technology, and cultural relations. Microsoft brings its expertise in delivering cutting edge technology and digital training and the British Council builds on its deep experience working with government ministries, schools, teachers, and students in sub-Saharan Africa. Over 2011-13, the British Council and Microsoft have each invested $1 million in the project, plus staff and in-kind resources.

Project Badiliko builds digital hubs at schools and community centres across Kenya, Tanzania, Uganda, Ethiopia, Ghana and Nigeria and provides a cascade model of professional development for teachers and school leaders.

For each digital hub, teachers are trained in leadership and innovative teaching practices, learning how to make the best use of the information and communications technology for transforming student learning. Those then train other teachers, who work together to disseminate their newfound skills through their own schools and communities.

Our impact:

In the first 2 years of the Badiliko project, we built 90 digital hubs and trained over 3,500 teachers and school leaders. By the end of the first phase of the project in 2013, we will provide over 100,000 learners and communities with digital access while making a significant contribution to the development of effective national ICT in Schools strategies in the six countries.

Following preparation of the designated room for the Hub, by the Mbale District Education Office (June-July 2012), the hardware was then installed by British Council technicians. The Hub was officially opened/launched in November 2012 and with a ceremony attended

by the 3 District Chairman of the sub-districts that make up the Mbale region, the Head of British Council Uganda, representatives of PONT, District Education Officers and a number of headteachers and teachers from schools in Mbale. All agreed that this was a significant and hugely appreciated new facility that would undoubtably help improve ICT educational skills across the region.

Hub Administrator (Mbale CAP) and PONT UK representative at the opening of the hub

Part 3: Use and Impact of the Grant

Teacher Training

To date, 200 teachers/headteachers have received training in the following areas:

- The need for IT skills in education and the overall aims of improving ICT knowledge and awareness for educational and professional development;
- An introduction to Microsoft Office programmes such as Word, Excel and Powerpoint;
- An introduction to Elementary (Primary) level packages in Science, Maths and Music, amongst others;
- Opportunities for using ICT to further education in Global Citizenship, particularly through the links with Welsh schools.

Impacts of the Training

As summarised in the Ugandan newspaper, the "Daily Monitor" on 27th November 2012, the Microsoft and British Council partnership aimed to "train teachers in leadership and innovative teaching practices, including how technology can support teaching and learning." As a result of the initial training provided by the British Council in the first phase and the continuing use and plans for the Hub, this process is well underway. The first 200 teachers trained are already reporting that they are cascading their skills, as described in

Appendix 1: Hub Trainee Testimonies. Skills acquired at Hub training days have even had an immediate effect in helping some individuals to pursue further qualifications, such as Mr Henry, who has now enrolled in a 'Computing and Information Systems' course. He reports that this is "a very exciting area" for him.

Example of computer setup at the hub   *Teacher training programme in progress*

As is evident from the testimonies in Appendix 1, pupils are benefitting from the training of their teachers. Many teachers outlined their new role as IT coordinators for their schools, and enthusiasm in sharing new-found knowledge with pupils. IT skills are required for A Level students in Uganda, but access to training and services in which to develop these skills is extremely limited. Now that teachers have begun to receive training and disseminate this to their pupils, we also intend to explore training courses aimed at senior pupils in schools.

Role of the Hub Administrator

Following training provided by the British Council in January 2012, the Hub Administrator took responsibility for the following tasks:
- to monitor the use and operation of the computers and ensure that any issues are communicated to the British Council/ PONT UK;
- to liaise with the District Education Office over any practical issues concerning the Hub room, e.g. security
- to co-ordinate and invite trainees from schools in Mbale, and keep records of the number of people receiving training.

Grant Expenditure Summary

Funding Organisation	Grant Budget Contribution
Microsoft	£4,000
British Council Uganda	£3,500
British and Foreign Schools Society	£7,500

Costs of room renovation, mains electricity and other running costs associated with the room itself were met by the Mbale District Government.

The British Council provided an IT trainer to conduct the initial round of training for teachers.

PONT UK helped facilitate some training costs, e.g. providing some refreshments for trainees.

The budget successfully enabled the purchase and installation of the 20 individual computers units and the 2 servers. Unfortunately internet service provision has not yet been installed – the British Council in Uganda have been trying to establish an overall deal with an internet service provider in Uganda to cover all of the Ugandan IT Hubs under this project. They have not yet been able to complete such a deal but we understand that they are continuing to explore this. We are awaiting developments and discussing our own ideas for local installation of internet services at the Hub if a British Council-facilitated deal is not achieved.

Remaining budget funds have been able to cover the purchase of:

- 20 office-style chairs for computer users/trainees
- a small stand-by generator (to enable training to continue during power cuts)
- a basic printer and photocopier
- some initial stationary and ink cartridges
- some fans, curtains and floor covering for the room.

Following discussions between the Hub Administrator, Mbale CAP and the District Education Office, it has also been agreed that some of the remaining funds be used for paying an allowance to an IT trainer (probably an IT graduate from a local university) for 12 month to facilitate further training at the Hub. The recruitment process for this is underway.

Part 4: Future of the Hub

The aims and plans for the future of the Hub are:

- to continue IT training for school teachers in Mbale;

- to make plans for opening up the Hub to some wider use by the local community and organisations (with the aim of creating some income for the Hub, e.g. through reprographics and printer services);

- to continue exploring options for providing internet connection to the Hub, either through the British Council or finding a local solution;

- to support schools in producing key educational and school resources; (e.g. learning materials and exam papers);

- to use the IT trainer based at the Hub (working with the Hub Administrator) to explore IT skills training packages that could be sold to individuals and organisations to generate income for the Hub;

In addition to securing internet services, the next logical step for the Hub is to identify an appropriate trainer to continue providing basic IT training in formal courses to teachers, and to hopefully offer other courses (at a cost) to generate some income for the Hub, which would be used to help cover running costs.

A business plan is being formulated for the Hub, aimed at facilitating its ongoing use and operations. As outlined above, a number of different activities and income generating streams are being planned.

Part 5: Conclusion

The Hub has been very well received in Mbale, as an exciting resource, and the first training activities have been enthusiastically welcomed, particularly by the teachers who have received training. It is disappointing that internet service installation has not yet been achieved but we are hopeful that a solution for this can still be found. Local partners (Mbale CAP and the District Government- Education Office) remain keen to play their part in overseeing the management and maintenance of the Hub going forward.

PONT UK and the Education Committee will continue to work closely with local partners to support the development of the Hub. Future school visits from Wales to Mbale will also now be able to visit the Hub facility and consider ways in which they can support its development (the next education/school visits occur in early 2014).

All partners are very grateful to the British and Foreign Schools Society for their support and input to this project, without which it would not have been possible to deliver.

Thank you.

Report prepared by:
Laura Brencher, Jayne Brencher and Jenny Allen (PONT UK)
Eleanor Catherine Hanyiga (Mbale CAP – Hub Administrator)
August 2013

Appendix 1: Hub Trainee Testimonies

NO	NAME/DETAILS	TESTIMONY
1.	Mr. Onyilo, Henry - University Graduate Teacher of Physics and Mathematics -School: Rongoroview Secondary School (Private) -Mbale District	I benefited so much from the ICT Hub 2-day training. It encouraged me to go for further studies. In fact I have enrolled for Computing and Information Systems and MTAC, Mbale Campus. I also started teaching computer lessons at school to Senior 1 and Senior 2 pupils and right now they are doing end-of-term-two Computer Examinations. It is a very exciting area for me. Thank you.
2.	Mr. Musame, Zachary -Diploma Teacher of Social Studies to P6 AND P7 -School: Nabumali Boarding Primary School (Govt) -Mbale District	I found the 1-day sessions so interesting. I became curious. There is only one computer in the school for the office. However, I sometimes use it to draw tables. I also go to town for internet. One of the nearby Secondary Schools will soon allow us to go for some more computer lessons. So I am excited. Thank you.
3.	Mr Shikoli, Eric -University Graduate Teacher of Geography and Economics -School: Maluku Secondary School (Private) -Mbale Municipality	The one-day training was so helpful. I happen to have been entrusted with teaching Computer lessons to Senior 5 so any additional knowledge was welcome. They are doing end-of-term-two Computer Examinations. I have also applied to join Bugema University for Computer Studies. So far, the school is happy with my work. I am excited. Thank you ICT Hub.
4.	Mrs. Mafabi, Sarah Werikhe -Headteacher of a Private Primary School -School: Erisa Primary and Nursery School (Private) -Mbale Municipality *She is also the Mbale PONT Education Committee Secretary and her school had the best Primary Leaving Results in PONT schools.	I thank you so much for the 2-day session. I learnt a lot especially as I already had a Laptop. Now I can use it so well though I look forward to more training at the Hub. I use the skills I got to keep records, make class lists, compile results and get totals, also to make reports and design papers for letters and other messages. I am now okay with the internet. The other teacher who attended uses the school computer to help me in many ways. Thank you.
5.	Mr. Makwa W., Joseph -Headteacher -School : Bududa Secondary School (Govnt) -Bududa District	I was excited about the ICT Hub training for we had just got one computer in the former school Bukalasi Secondary School. Here at Bududa Secondary School there is a Computer Lab. And all classes Senior 1 to 6 are taught computer and examined. I have a computer in my office and I use it for letters, internet, records and personal research. When are we coming for more lessons at the ICT Hub?
6.	Ms Nagudi, Norah	It was exciting to come for the two sessions. I

	-University Graduate Teacher of Geography and Christian Religious Education. -School: Bungokho Secondary School (Govt) -Mbale District	use the skills I got for my own research purposes especially Word. I wish students could come to the ICT Hub especially when there is internet. They are so keen because the School Computer Lab is not yet operational yet they are keen to learn. Thank you so much.
7.	Mr. Ongodia, George -Headteacher of a Private Secondary School -School: Manafa High School (Private) -Mbale Municipality	I am very grateful for the 2-day session at the ICT Hub. I have a computer in my office and in other offices. I also own a Laptop. I use mostly Word and internet. We use the Computers in school for teaching, records, exams and report cards. All classes are taught computer Senior 1 to 6. Thanks for inviting me. And my staff members.
8.	Mr. Mukhwana, Robert -Headteacher -School: Nyondo Demonstration Primary School (Govt) -Mbale District	It was very exciting to attend the one-day session. I learnt quite a lot. I use the skill I got for surfing the net, setting exams, making reports as well as getting totals especially working with marks. I look forward to more training at the Hub with my friends. Thank you.
9.	Ms Batwegomba, Beatrix -Diploma Teacher of Geography and Christian Religious Education -School: Bugema Compr. Secondary school (Private) -Mbale District	I thank you so much for the one-day training. I learnt a lot. Computer is taught to Senior 5 and 6 but for me I am happy to use it for internet, class lists, making totals and writing using Word. I intend to come for more training. Even my friends want to come. Thanks.
10.	Mr. Mwambu -Certificate Teacher of Sciences -School: Yoweri Museveni primary School (Govt) -Mbale Municipality	I was very excited to attend the one-day session. I learnt a lot. There is no computer in this school. However I can go to a café and surf. I also make my own class lists, records and also totals. I will open another one. I thank you!