Online School Feedback 2009
Second Phase

Introduction

The Online Feedback system was first piloted with a small sample of twelve schools in Uganda in January. The main purpose of an online system was to collect comprehensive data from schools with no intermediary, while simultaneously minimising the courtesy bias by facilitating feedback with no face-to-face interaction. The response-rate of the pilot was extremely high (42%), and the respondents were unexpectedly open and detailed in their answers. On this basis the survey was sent to all Camara schools visited by the M&E officers in 2009.

The response rate for the second phase was quite disappointing by contrast, with a total of 11 surveys completed from 149 schools (7.4%). The overall response rate for the year was responses from 15 schools, representing a response rate of 10%. Considering that a sizeable proportion of the schools have no e-mail addresses, and only a minority have on-site internet access, this is actually a reasonably positive outcome. However, for the online system to become a more prominent component of Camara's M&E system there is a decided need to promote the surveys more heavily to schools as a primary condition in their original contracts, essentially making participation mandatory.

Perhaps the most worrying finding of the system was that no schools from Ethiopia responded. While there were only 20 schools visited, and few of these had e-mail addresses, the absence of any direct feedback is a decided cause for concern. Camara rang all of the schools in the four countries so there is no reason as to why Ethiopia would have such a poor response rate. Lesotho, by contrast was relatively good given the poor school visit performance, with 3 out of only 13 schools completing the survey. Kenya was disappointing, with 5 of 56 surveys completed. Uganda was easily the most impressive in terms of responses, with 7 from 48 schools visited, including the pilot. The findings included here are only from the second phase, as the findings of the pilot have already been published.

It is important to stress that the schools that responded to the survey are most likely the best positioned of the Camara schools in terms of resources and staff. Therefore the findings are not representative, merely indicative. The feedback from teachers in terms of how strategically integrated ICT can facilitate better teaching proved to be highly valuable. One teacher highlighted the benefits of ICT in terms of improving reading and communication skills. Another pointed to improved student attitudes and the importance of ICT as a source of information. The broad perspective from teachers was that ICT is an important tool for upskilling their students and enhancing learning.

In terms of using computers, the most frequently used software application was predictably Open Office Writer. This was followed closely by the Open Office Spreadsheet programme which seems less likely to be accurate. The few schools that do have the internet seem to use it regularly, and those that have been shown the offline Wikipedia software use it quite extensively. It is clear that the HIV/Respect Software is not being used at all, and will not be until systematic teacher training is provided to support it. The rule of thumb seems to be that the software provided needs to be accompanied by appropriate teacher training to be used in a meaningful way. This applies to all of the Camarabuntu games and there is a definite need to promote these more actively.

1. Number of Schools

	Uganda	**Kenya**	**Lesotho**	**Total**
Total Schools	3	5	3	11

2. Respondent's Role at school

	Uganda	**Kenya**	**Lesotho**	**Total**
Computer Teacher	1 (33%)	1 (20%)	2 (67%)	4 (36%)
Headmaster/Headmistress	0	4 (80%)	1 (33%)	5 (45%)
Director	2 (67%)	0	0	2 (18%)
Administrator	0	0	0	0
Other	0	0	0	0

3. Total Computers Received/Still Working

	Uganda	**Kenya**	**Lesotho**	**Total**
Computers Received	37	65	120	222

Computers Still Working	37 (100%)	28[1]	116 (96.6%)	181(82%)
Computers Broken	0	20 (27%)	4 (3.3%)	24 (10.8%)
Mean Received Per School	12.3	15	40	20.2

4. Date of Reception

	Uganda	**Kenya**	**Lesotho**	**Total**
2009	0	1 (20%)	0	1 (9%)
2008	2 (67%)	0	2 (67%)	4 (36%)
2007	1 (33%)	3 (60%)	1 (33%)	5 (45%)
2006	0	1 (20%)	0	1 (9%)
2005	0	0	0	0

5. Hub's Fulfilment in Delivering Order

	Uganda	**Kenya**	**Lesotho**	**Total**
Very Efficient	1 (33%)	2 (40%)	1 (33%)	4 (36%)
Efficient	1 (33%)	3 (60%)	2 (67%)	6 (55%)
Neutral	1 (33%)	0	0	1 (9%)
Inefficient	0	0	0	0
Very Inefficient	0	0	0	0

[1] Given the number of broken computers and the details given this figure is almost certainly misreported.

6. Uses of Computers in Schools (respondents were asked to tick all that applied)

	Uganda	Kenya	Lesotho	Total
Teaching students to use pcs	3 (100%)	5 (100%)	3 (100%)	11(100%)
Teaching other subjects with pcs	1 (33%)	0	0	1 (9%)
Writing exams, reports etc.	0	3 (60%)	1 (33%)	4 (36%)
Administration	2 (67%)	3 (60%)	0	5 (45%)
Other	0	1[2]	0	1 (9%)

7. Operating System Used

	Uganda	Kenya	Lesotho	Total
Linux	2 (67%)	4 (80%)	1 (33%)	7 (64%)
Windows	1 (33%)	0	2 (67%)	3 (27%)
Linux and Windows Combination	0	1 (20%)	0	1 (9%)

8. Operating System Preferred

	Uganda	Kenya	Lesotho	Total
Linux	0	4 (80%)	1 (33%)	5 (45%)
Windows	3(100%)	1 (20%)	2 (67%)	6 (55%)

The reasons given for preferring Windows included the fact that it is the Operating System commonly used by educational institutions and employers in all three countries and that teachers are used to it. The cited benefits of Linux are that it is virus free, has relevant educational programmes, and is easy to maintain.

One school in Kenya had downloaded additional games, a typing tutor, videos, and anti-virus software. Another had downloaded Wine, which is a programme that allows Linux users to run software designed for Windows. None of the other schools had downloaded any additional material. The additional software requested is fascinating, and very much sets the bar for Camara in the future. Some of the additional materials that schools suggested were as follows:

1. Dictionaries in both English and Swahili.
2. Additional games.
3. Maths, English, Chemistry and Biology Educational Software.
4. SSH to allow data exchange between two networked devices.
5. Maps of The World and East Africa

[2] 'Community'

9. Schools that Have Required Maintenance

	Uganda	Kenya	Lesotho	Total
Yes	1 (33%)	4 (80%)	1 (33%)	6 (55%)
No	2 (67%)	1 (20%)	2 (67%)	5 (45%)

10. Schools that Have Received Maintenance

	Uganda	Kenya	Lesotho	Total
Yes	1 (33%)	2 (40%)	1 (33%)	4 (36%)
No	2 (67%)	2 (40%)	2 (67%)	6 (55%)
No Answer	0	1 (20%)	0	1 (9%)

11. Schools that Were Charged for Maintenance[3]

	Uganda	Kenya	Lesotho	Total
Yes	0	1 (50%)	1 (50%)	2 (40%)
No	1(100%)	1 (50%)	1 (50%)	3 (60%)

In terms of improving the maintenance service the major demands are for more regular visits by technicians, and for maintenance training for teachers. Some of the demands are clearly unrealistic, such as ongoing free maintenance, free replacement of broken computers, and monthly visits by technicians. This is interesting from the point of view that teachers seem to very much view Camara as they would a traditional charity, with all that it entails, rather than a social enterprise.

[3]Answers only included from schools who have either received maintenance or who are charged subscriptions. Several schools had said they were not charged but had not received maintenance.

12. Schools that Have also Received Computers from another Source

	Uganda	Kenya	Lesotho	Total
Yes	1 (33%)	3 (60%)	2 (67%)	6 (55%)
No	2 (67%)	2 (40%)	1 (33%)	5 (45%)

It is interesting that so many of the schools had received computers from another source. In four of these cases it was from another donor, with UNESCO in Kenya and School Net Lesotho being mentioned in particular. One school had actually bought laptops on the open market. Clearly there is a bias in terms of better positioned schools getting computers from multiple sources. There is a definite need to establish whether this applies specifically to the schools that responded to the survey, given that they are presumably more proactive, or whether it applies to the schools that approach Camara more generally.

13. Comparison of Camara Hardware with other Computers

	Uganda	Kenya	Lesotho	Total
Much Better	0	2 (40%)	1 (33%)	3 (27%)
Better	1 (33%)	2 (40%)	2 (67%)	5 (45%)
Neutral	2 (67%)	1 (20%)	0	3 (27%)
Worse	0	0	0	0
Much Worse	0	0	0	0

14. Comparison of Camara Software with other Computers

	Uganda	Kenya	Lesotho	Total
Much Better	0	2 (40%)	2 (67%)	4 (36%)
Better	1 (33%)	2 (40%)	0	3 (27%)
Neutral	1 (33%)	1 (20%)	1 (33%)	3 (27%)
Worse	1 (33%)	0	0	1 (9%)
Much Worse	0	0	0	0

Some of the more interesting justifications for these hardware and software comparisons were as follows:

1. Given the developments in the industry working with P2s and P3s is tedious.
2. The Camara computers are durable and rarely break down.
3. A bit old, sometimes slow, and I don't like the CRTs.
4. All computers are useful and Camara computers are no different.
5. The hardware is small and the software is not easily affected by viruses.

Given the significant improvements in the quality of Camara computers since the end of 2008, it is likely that teachers will become increasingly satisfied with the hardware. While there is a decided courtesy bias at play that is clearly skewing the responses, the justifications are quite credible. It is important to remember that many teachers are only exposed to other computers in internet cafes, where the hardware is often slowed down considerably by viruses. There is a definite need to continue developing and promoting the Camarabuntu suite based on teacher and student demands.

15. Average Cost of a Camara Computer

	Uganda	Kenya	Lesotho	Average
Local currency	100,000 UGS	3,833 KSH	400 Maloti	€36.79[4]
Euro	€36.89	€36.17	€38.24	€36.79

16. Teacher Satisfaction Rates with the Cost of Camara Computers.

	Uganda	Kenya	Lesotho	Total
Very Satisfied	0	1 (20%)	2 (67%)	3 (27%)
Satisfied	2 (67%)	2 (40%)	0	4 (36%)
Neutral	1 (33%)	0	1 (33%)	2 (18%)
Dissatisfied	0	2 (40%)	0	2 (18%)
Very Dissatisfied	0	0	0	0

17. Respondent Schools that had Received Training from Camara.

	Uganda	Kenya	Lesotho	Total
Yes, from the Irish volunteers	2 (67%)	4 (80%)	0	6 (55%)
Yes, from the local Hub	0	0	0	0
No	1 (33%)	1 (20%)	3 (100%)	5 (45%)

18. Proportion of Schools that were told what to do with PCs upon End-of-Life.

	Uganda	Kenya	Lesotho	Total
Yes	0	4 (100%)	0	4 (40%)
No	3(100%)	0	3 (100%)	6 (60%)

19. Likelihood of Schools buying Camara Computers Again.

	Uganda	Kenya	Lesotho	Total
Very Likely	0	2 (40%)	2 (67%)	4 (36%)
Likely	2 (67%)	3 (60%)	1 (33%)	6 (55%)
Neutral	1 (33%)	0	0	1 (9%)
Unlikely	0	0	0	0
Very Unlikely	0	0	0	0

In terms of suggesting as to how Camara could improve its service to schools teachers were very insightful. Some of the more helpful recommendations were as follows:

1. Regular maintenance services, at least twice a year.
2. Send more competent maintenance technicians.
3. Install software appropriate to the national education system.
4. Give more training to teachers.

[4] Mean cost per computer, multiplied by numbers attributed to each country, divided by total.

5. Allow schools to install additional software, especially Windows.

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