Establishment of a Learning Centre
At
Mbarara University of Science and Technology

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Acknowledgment

This is a bachelor's thesis report by Carolina Olsson within the education program People Computer Work Science (PCW) at Blekinge Institute of Technology (BTH). The PCW program consists of two equal parts: (1) computer science and (2) work science. Training in the PCW program results in both an understanding of IT-artifacts within the work environment and the design of suitable user solutions.

This project was carried out within the LUMUST-project in Uganda, Mbarara. LUMUST is an ongoing collaboration between the University of Lund and Mbarara University of Science and Technology (MUST) and the department of medicine and global Health. SIDA is the main sponsor and the project has been running since 2002.

My main observation took place at MUST and the practical part of my project was carried out during two weeks from the 24th of February till the 12th of March 2004.

Tutors:
Supervisors: Mårten Pettersson (BTH) and Sarah Olofsson (BTH).
Supervisors: Anette Agardh Lund University (LU) and Lasse Bourelius (BTH) both provided me with material and great support.
Background information - Uganda

The Republic of Uganda is a landlocked country in East Africa, bordered on the east by Kenya, the north by Sudan, on the west by the Democratic Republic of the Congo, on the southwest by Rwanda, and on the south by Tanzania. The southern part of the country includes a substantial portion of Lake Victoria, within which it shares borders with Kenya and Tanzania. Uganda takes its name from the Buganda kingdom, which encompassed a portion of the south of the country including the capital Kampala.¹

¹ Wikipedia
Abstract

This report focuses on the establishment of a new Learning Centre\(^2\) within the LUMUST-project at MUST in Uganda. One important part of the development is to carry through careful examination of the situation and what the needs and expectation are. If this is done it would be easier to reach peoples expectations.

*The main purpose is to carry through a study among students and staff and map out their requirements and expectation on the new learning centre* and summarize this in the report.

During a period of two weeks I have conducted a fieldwork at MUST and I have carried out interviews, focus groups and observations at the university. Through this fieldwork I have been able to map out the needs and how the Learning centre should be managed and conducted in the future.

One important observation I made was that the accessibility of computers are rare however students found computer and IT access very important in their schoolwork and research so a new Learning centre will be welcomed.

Gradually the development of a new Learning centre has begun, this also enables the expansion of the LUMUST-project and hopefully in a near future enabling the expansion of Net based courses intended for students and staff. The development of the new Learning centre will hopefully broaden both the staff and the students learning environment in a positive way.

The result of my work is this report, which is based on my observations and my recommendations of a Learning centre. I have also, on the basis of a PCW perspective, discussed how the new Learning centre will be managed to be able to achieve sustainability.

\(^2\) Learning Centre: In this case a place where information is available in terms of Information Technology, literature and multimedia.
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1 Introduction

This Bachelor Thesis is the result of my field study at MUST and my continued work at Blekinge Institute of Technology (BTH) which was carried out during spring 2004 and this result will be presented in this report. In this introduction I will give an account of the aims of the project and its focus.

In April 2003 I was included in the LUMUST project where the aims were to carry out basic computer lessons for students and staff at Mbarara University of Science and Technology. At the same time, another working group within the LUMUST-project planned for a new Learning centre at the university library.

Since I first carried out the work in Mbarara I have developed an interest in working with development countries and last autumn I presented my interest in following the planning and the establishing of the new Learning centre for Anette Agardh and Lasse Bourelius and my idea was welcomed. Together with Anette Agardh and Lasse Bourelius we started to plan my objectives and aims for the project. Together with Anette Agardh we prepared the interview- and focus group questions in order to receive the best information and outcome through my observation. I studied material and reports about Learning centers which has been carried out around the world to be able to prepare as much as possible before my departure.

During two weeks I performed fieldwork at Mbarara University and I had interviews, focus groups and my own observations at the university with student and teachers to collect information for my report. I also visited the specific area in the library which has been appointed to be the new Learning centre room to get a feel of how this all could work out.

The gathered material will be use carefully when I continue to write about a step towards a new Learning centre and I will give my perspectives and recommendations on what the needs and requirements and also what it takes to create a sustainable Learning centre. Last but not least I will summarize this report with a discussion and a conclusion.
2 Background to the LUMUST-project

Towards the end of 2000 the Department of Community Health (DoCH) at Mbarara University of Science and Technology developed an interest in collaborating with the Division of Social Medicine, Department of Community Medicine, at Lund University, Sweden. To investigate the possibilities of collaboration between the two universities, several meetings were held during a period from March 2001 to May 2001 between staff from the two institutions.

The result of these meetings was a development of proposal for collaboration between MUST and Lund University. These proposals were presented to the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (SIDA) and the Uganda Country Office in Kampala.

The Division of Social Medicine (DSM), Lund University, Sweden, and the Department of Community Health, Mbarara University of Science & Technology, have a focus on community health during their theoretical and practical work. The core activity of both institutions is to train undergraduate medical students, and strengthen collaboration in the area of community involvement in health. Common for both universities is that they use community placements for practical exposure for the medical students. MUST and DSM are both involved in activities that are aimed at improving health conditions of people in their communities.

The main purpose with the collaboration is to offer short courses for staff. Human Resource Development and students and staff exchange. To be able to carry out these activities and strengthen the communication within the LUMUST-project, a resource centre was introduced at a guesthouse in Mbarara to offer the project-members, staff and students the chance to communicate and to develop their computer knowledge. With an approval from SIDA in Kampala, Internet was introduced into the resource centre to offer the chance to collect information from the Internet and to be able to communicate with involved people within the LUMUST-project.

The resource centre at the SIDA guest house has become a good resource for involved parts and contains three stationary computers connected to the Internet. The result of the resource centre has strengthened and influenced the development of project activities, and led to new, unexpected opportunities for the collaboration for example the possibilities to attend Net based courses. So far, the outcome of the collaboration has exceeded all expectations. The number of participants and the interest to study net based courses has increased for the past few
years which have resulted in that ICT needs to develop. This is mainly explained by the new opportunities the resource centre has contributed to.

Since the project was founded the project members have increased in participation and the need of ICT facilities needs to grow. In January 2003 a group was formed with an aim to define the ICT needs in the project for the coming years. The group stated that ICT facilities need to grow slowly to ensure sustainability. The reason is to make sure that the situation could be managed.

Because of the small space in the SIDA guesthouse a temporary Learning centre has been selected to constitute the new Learning centre while waiting for the construction of a much-needed permanent office block for the department of Community Health. The new Learning centre is placed on the second floor at the universities library. At the moment the room is used as a study room for post graduated students.

A Learning centre in Uganda is a relative new expression. In Sweden, there are several different Learning centres that people can visit. A Learning centre contains artefact like computers, Internet, books, magazines and news papers. Some schools around Sweden has Learning centres were students can work and read. But there are also Learning centres for the public but to be able to use these facilities they have to pay a fee. The difference between a Learning centre and Internet café is that the Internet café has almost only computers and Internet connection while the Learning centre could offer more than just Internet. The Internet cafes are mostly used for e-mailing and light Internet search while the Learning centres are centres were people could search information and read and learn. Most of the Learning centres which I have visited have subscription on different newspapers, magazines and databases.
3 Methods

The following chapters I will describe the different methods I used during my visit to Mbarara and give an analysis of these methods and how they have helped me to map out the needs and requirement for a new learning centre. I will also explain the reason why I choose these methods and my line of action.

3.1 Interviews

Together with Mr. Gad Ruzazza, who is a project coordinator for the LUMUST project in Uganda, we structured and planned for all the meetings. We also worked through my interview and focus group questions before the meetings to be able to receive as much information as possible. I used course literature to be able to structure my interview questions and followed the recommendations on how to carry out Interviews, focus groups and documentations.

I began every interview and focus group session with an introduction of my project and the aim with my study which in that case gave the participants an understanding of the meeting. The interviews\(^3\) were held with students and staff under each department at Mbarara University as they where the key target and where going to be the main users of the learning centre.

Interviews are good methods as you can ask direct questions and follow up on further questions if you are not happy with the answers. I could also adjust my interview questions after the conversation which is always helpful.

Another advantage with interviews was the fact that I could get straight and honest answers from the participant as it was just the two of us and there was no pressure from other participants.

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\(^3\) Appendix 3, Interview questions
3.2 Focus groups

Focus groups are compounded groups with a purpose to focus on specific questions. Ideally a focus group should contain between six and eight people, anymore and you will not get enough detailed information from each person\(^4\).

My focus groups\(^5\) were held with MPH- and Post graduated students to examine what their expectations were with the new Learning centre. Because of the small amount of MPH- and Post graduated students I also had focus groups with undergraduate medical students from first year till fifth year to be able to receive as much information as possible and also as they will be potential future users as well.

I divided the focus groups into male and female groups and the main reason was that I didn’t want the female students to feel pressure from the male student. I have previous experience from mixed focus groups and most of the times they have always been dominated by the male and their opinions. Last time I experienced this was then I visited Mbarara the first time and we had computer lessons (mixed group of female and male student). In 9 out of 10 the male student where sitting in front of the computer practicing, while the female students where observing. With divided groups the participants were active and it was interesting to follow the discussions from a female and a male point of view. One interesting observation was that I received different answers from the male and the female group and I will describe this when I analyse the different methods.

The advantage with focus groups is that most of the questions create an interesting discussion and one subject will often develop into another. This is what I experienced and even though the beginning was a bit rigid most of the focus groups turned into a wild discussion and I could most of the time sit back and just follow the discussion and take notes.

When carrying through focus groups it’s important the group focus on specific questions and as I mentioned earlier it’s easy to slip away from the subject. Therefore it’s important as a moderator to make sure that the focus group doesn’t leave the subject.

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\(^4\) Ely, M. Doing Qualitative Research: Circles within Circles p.77

\(^5\) Appendix 4, Focus group questions
3.3 Documentation

Taking photographs was one method of documentation that I used. During my observations I took pictures for my project to be able to organize and structure my work. By photographing I could remember the participants from the meetings\textsuperscript{6} and sometimes a picture could say more than a text\textsuperscript{7}. In all cases when taking photos it is important to ask the person first if alright being photographed and also explain what it will be used for. This is to avoid any misunderstandings.

3.4 Recorder

When I carried out my Interviews and Focus groups I used a recorder to be able to focus more on the meeting and conversation than on taking notes. Before every meeting I asked the participants if it was all right to use a recorder. Unfortunately the majority of the participants did not appreciate it so I used paper and pen to be able to take notes on the occasions were I was not able to use the recorder. When I was able to use the recorder it was a great help in my work especially during the time when I was writing this report. View summarize of the focus group and Interview question in appendix 5.

3.5 Analysis of methods

Two of the most important ways to collect ethnographic fact are to listen and watch\textsuperscript{8}. I choose to use the methods interview, focus group and documentation because they supported me best in my work and is a complement to just taking notes and listening.

Interviews are very useful for gaining information on a subject although it takes a lot of training and preparation before an interview. The first couple of interviews I carried through I got several questions which I was not prepared on but after some time I got more self confidence and this reflected in the interview as I was comfortable and could answer upcoming questions.

Another advantage I experienced using interviews was that I could see the participant face expression i.e. if they didn’t understand my question or wanted more information. On the other hand single interviews could be very time consuming not only the actual interview but also summarizing

\textsuperscript{6} Hammersley, A, Ethnography - Principles in Practice p.34
\textsuperscript{7} Liedman, S-E p.116
\textsuperscript{8} Ely, M. Doing Qualitative Research:Circles within Circles p.104
conclusion of the interview. Most of the time if spent up to 45 minutes per interview plus an extra hour to work through the material before I had a final version.

The focus groups where the most efficient and useful method as these occasions create a good discussion about expectations and needs and also suggestions on how it should be managed. It was very successful dividing the groups in male and female team as I experienced the female participants more open when there where no male students involved. I also noticed that the groups focused on different details. The female groups focused on design and usability and the importance of privacy while they are working while the male group focused on what kind of software and hardware the Learning centre could use. In all the groups I experienced excitement as this topic really concerned the students and the staffs so when the discussion began it was a pleasure to follow the discussion. However one thing that I noticed was that focus groups can be a great method because it allows the participants to open up and share their views and visions but on the other hand it might not work in the reality as in most cases there are budget limitations. So I would recommend using a combination of different methods as this will give a fair result.

The recorder and all the documentation I did during my research helped me a lot when writing this report. Now afterwards I realize that I should have used the recorder everyday in my work, not only when I had interviews but also a way to gather my thoughts. When you carried through your research under such a short period and also being abroad
you gather so many impressions that it would have been useful to record all of these and used them when writing this thesis. But at the same time all the photos I took helped me remember the situation.
4 Results

4.1 Focus group male students

The result of the focus groups, which I held, gave me information about the student's expectations of the new Learning centre. The first group was held with MPH-students who studies Master Program of Community Health at MUST and the participants were only male students. Their expectation with the new Learning centre is that they will get the possibility to access information databases and also get access to Internet.

The MPH-students, who are writing thesis and spending a lot of time doing research, will be able to use the Learning centre more than other students they will have other classes and other school projects while the MPH-students can focus on their work in the Learning centre. So this focus group was particularly important as they where going to be the main user.

The new Learning centre will not only give the MPH-student the chance access to information but also a chance to develop their computer knowledge which is a high priority for the majority as computer knowledge is the key to a good job according to the people I spoke to.

During my research I got the chance to observe some of the students while they were working on their thesis. I saw that they also had a lack of knowledge in information search. They were familiar with i.e. Google and Yahoo but they had no previous experience searching in databases. The MPH-students said that this was something they wanted to learn when the new Learning centre is open.

I ended the male focus group with a question which gave the students the chance to thing individually of what the expected or would need in the new Learning centre. The common answer was space and several computers. Another common denominator was access to Medical related databases where they could find information.

4.2 Focus group female students

The second focus group was held with medical female students and the participants were from first year to fifth year medical students. I used the same questions as I used during focus group with male MPH-students.

\[9 \text{ www.google.com} \]
\[10 \text{ www.yahoo.com} \]
It came to my knowledge that none of the participants owned a computer so the only access they had was when they got the chance to use a computer at school and even there it was difficult to access one. Therefore their computer knowledge was low and when they got the opportunity to use one it was mainly for emailing. So a high priority among the participants was to have easy access to a computer and also to have basic computer lessons available at the Learning Centre. At the moment the main source of information comes from old books and magazines. "The Learning centre will give us a chance to access updated information on the Internet which we haven’t been able to access before"11

The Learning centre will be a new learning environment for them and they told me that if they will access the new Learning centre “We will spend as much time as possible because there is so much information that they could access”12. I continued the discussion by asking if their study required any privacy while they were studying and the answers that I received was “We think it is important to study in privacy because sometimes you don’t want other students to look at your work. As medical students we would like to read about diseases and some students may not be comfortable with it”13

I ended the focus group same way as for the make students with a question which gave the female students the chance to thing individually of what the expected or would need in the new Learning centre. The medical student’s prioritized soft ware programs for example Medicine Online, African Journal on Line (AJOL), databases and medical journals. They also wanted computers were they could burn CDs with medical pictures which they could share and discuss with other medical students. These CDs could consist of pictures of medical operations, pictures of different diseases and pictures of the latest medical equipment.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Female</th>
<th>Male</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Privacy – when studying sensitive material e.g. medical diseases</td>
<td>Easy access ideally 24/7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Access to online journals e.g. AJOL</td>
<td>Several computers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Access to databases</td>
<td>Internet connection</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Basic computer lessons held in the new learning centre</td>
<td>Windows OS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ability to burn and share CD’s with other medical students e.g. students from Lund’s university</td>
<td>New computer programs on request</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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11 From meeting with female focus group, Estella, March 3rd in the Sida guest house.
12 From meeting with female focus group, Aida, March 3rd in the Sida guest house.
13 From meeting with female focus group, March 3rd in the Sida guest house.
5 A step towards a new Learning centre

Until now I have presented the ICT situation in Mbarara and also described what the students and staff at Mbarara University expect with the new Learning centre. I have presented my filed work information and what the students and staff need in the new Learning centre. With this material I will compile a summary of my own recommendation from a MDA-students perspective.

5.1 A structured organization behind the Learning Centre

The new Learning centre will be placed on the second floor in the university library. To start with, Post-graduated students\textsuperscript{14} and MPH-students\textsuperscript{15} will be the main users of the Learning centre as I don't recommend giving access to everyone at once. It would be much better to start with a couple of groups and expand it gradually. This will allow the Learning centre to grow successive.

I will now give my perspective on the new Learning centre and how it will be managed on the base of my research at Mbarara University. To be able to achieve sustainability with the Learning centre there should be a structured organization behind the Learning centre. Dr. Jerome Kabauyenga has the main responsibility for major decisions concerning the Learning centre.

On the base of my research and interviews with key persons the Learning centre will be under direct supervision of the library management in conjunction with the Department of Community Health. Within this group there should be a representation from the LUMUST-project, staff from the Department of Community Health, student representatives, project members and technical staff. The university administrator has a commitment to set aside funds to maintain and ensure continued use of the service well after the initial installation period.

To be able to access the new Learning centre, students and staff will go through a basic computer course to be able to use the Learning centre. This course will be held in the Learning centre so students will get familiar with the new environment and the equipment.

There will be an organization group who will have the main responsibility for the Learning centre. The organization group will choose a person with technical knowledge. This person will have responsibility for the technical

\textsuperscript{14} Students which have studied a program at MUST and choose to continue their studies

\textsuperscript{15} MPH-students are Master Program public Health which is a Master Program at MUST

16
equipment and unforeseen failures and brake downs. This technical person will work in the Learning centre and make sure that only students with accessibility are using the Learning centre. For the moment Mbarara University has one technician, Mr. Kelly, who manages all the computers at Mbarara University. It will be impossible for Mr. Kelly to manage the new Learning center as he is already very busy with other duties so it will be necessary for the organization group to hire a new technician who shall concentrate and focus on the new Learning centre.

Mrs. Anna Gallibayo is the head librarian at Mbarara University library and she has the main responsibility for the library. Anna Gallibayo will have the responsibility for the Learning centre during daytime. Since the library is open from 8am till 10pm the Learning centre should have the same opening hours so students and staff could work there during daytime. Although it’s been requested from several student to have access to the learning centre any time any day\(^\text{16}\)

\(^{16}\) Oyston, E. Centred on Learning, Academic case studies on Learning Centre Development p 162.
5.2 A register book

There should be a register book at the entrance where students and staff will sign in before entering the Learning centre. Mrs. Anna Gallibayo will have the main responsibility for the register book and during daytime the person who is sitting at the entrance will make sure that everyone who is entering the Learning centre will sign in and when they leave they will have to sign out.

![Fig 1.2 Sign in and out book](image)

I also recommend introducing a student under the Department of Community Health in the organization group as it is an advantage to involve students as they will feel more included in the Learning centre.

5.3 Software and programs

During my focus groups and interviews I gathered information on what they expected when it comes to software and programs. Medical students require MedOnline which is a medical support online. They were also interested in exchanging information with medical students at Lund University via CD\textsuperscript{17}.

\textsuperscript{17} CD=Compact Diskette
MPH-students and post graduated students require database access and e-journals where they can find information which they could add to their work. Students and staff consider that databases online is an important complement in their study. Database licenses are expensive but there are some alternatives, for example African Journals on Line (AJOL) and INASP. Another solution could be to give the students and the staff accessibility to databases via Lund University or Blekinge Institute of Technology.

Some students were interested in manuals where they can read and study Microsoft Windows and also how to seek information on the Internet. These manuals could be a support when students and staff are working in the new Learning centre.

The technical equipment intended for the Learning centre is bought from Kampala in Uganda. From the beginning the plan was to buy the equipment from Sweden and transport it down to Mbarara. But the expenses were too high so the LUMUST-project decided to buy the technical equipment from Kampala. There will be an UTL (Uganda Telecom) Internet connection with 64/64KbS and printers.

The computers will have operating system Microsoft Windows and a virus program in order to protect the computers. Microsoft Windows is the most common operating system in Uganda and Mbarara and in a learning perspective Microsoft is easy to learn and understand. To be able to achieve sustainability with the Learning centre it is important to use equipment which is understandable and easy accessible. Firewalls to protect the computers against viruses and spy programs will also be available. Several of the participants also requested privacy and as every user will be provide log in and password they will be able to save their work and access it from any other computer in the room.
5.4 Sign in system

Every user will be given their own log in and password and they will be able to save their work and access it from any computer in the room.

Fig 1.3 Persons with accessibility will get a personal account were they can log on to the computer.

It is important that an administrator, for example a librarian or a dedicated technical staff is present at the Learning centre during opening ours incase of any problems or errors\textsuperscript{18} and it will be strictly forbidden to enter unsuitable WebPages or various dating pages.

5.5 Equipment

The equipment in the new Learning centre for example computers, printers, air conditioning and internet connection are important key factors. UPS are also mandatory as the electricity in Uganda is not stable and without a UPS this could be harmful for the computers.

Air conditioning is important equipment in the Learning centre. The temperature in Uganda is high and the variation between the damp and

\textsuperscript{18} Scott A, Learning centre, A step by step guide to planning and managing P.140
dry climate is also harmful for the equipment it will be necessary to look into lock the computers into the tables to avoid burglary.

It is important to buy the right equipment that the organization group and the technician can handle. If the equipment is too difficult the Learning centre will not function. It is also important that the technician can support and understand the Learning centre in case of a brake down or other problems. Another important part when it comes to establishment of a Learning centre is to use the right equipment that is reasonable in an economic way. For the moment, SIDA is the main sponsor for the establishment but it is important that the university can manage and run the Learning centre by them selves in a near future.
6 Discussion

When I first visited Uganda and Mbarara 2003 I was impressed of the country’s beauty and its people. Uganda was during ten years under a dictatorship and inhabitants were exposed a lot of strain. When the dictatorship was overthrown the county started to fight for democracy and a country free from intruders. Uganda is in a developing stage, even though the country is poor there is a will to develop and educate the young population.

The first time I visited Mbarara University of Science and Technology I was impressed of that a small town like Mbarara could have such an impressive University. Even tough the amount of students are small they have the possibility to educate medical student and computer science students. The slogan of Mbarara University is: “Succeed we MUST” and they really try to live up to the slogan. Students at Mbarara University are focused and there is a will to succeed.

During the past years there has been a growing awareness and a realization among students and staff that IT and ICT is a key for development.

During my studies at Mbarara University I discussed with students and key persons how the new Learning centre should be managed and what their need and expectations are.

The new Learning centre will offer a new learning environment for the students with accessibility. In the beginning the Learning centre will be available for student within the LUMUST-project, MPH- and postgraduate students. The reason why it is only dedicated to a small group is because the Learning centre will develop gradually. The advantage with the Learning centre is that the knowledge will spread to students and staff outside of the Learning centre and the LUMUST-project. Just like Jean Lave and Etienne Wenger discuss in their book “Situated Learning, Legitimate peripheral participation” (LPP) that knowledge is like circles on the water surface. One circle spread to another circle just like knowledge spread.

Mbarara is slowly developing towards a partly computerized community. Even though the road is long the development has accelerated since I first visited Mbarara. I think that in a near future there will be Learning centers at other places in Mbarara. Today it is too expensive for the majority of the inhabitants in Mbarara to buy a computer but visiting a Learning centre could be realistic. I have seen the development of Internet cafés around Mbarara and Kampala so it is possible for Learning centers to develop in the same way.
7 Conclusions

During my observations I have been able to look into the possibilities to establish a new Learning centre at Mbarara University library. As starting point from my collected material I managed to analyze and summarize it in this report.

On the base of my research I have realized that it is possible to establish a learning centre at Mbarara University. But I have also understood that it is important to have a detailed plan before establishing of a Learning centre. It is also important to have a structured organization behind the Learning centre and will make the important decisions. There should be knowledgeable person with computer knowledge who can handle the Learning centre and manage it. The choice of equipment must be suitable for the users to be able to achieve usability and a familiar environment for the users.

The key factors around the Learning centre are structured organization, security, the right equipment and accessibility. Another important part when it comes to building a Learning centres is to develop it successive so the situation could be handheld. If all these key factors are functioning the Learning centre will achieve sustainability.

I believe that the new Learning centre will be a great opportunity for students and staff and give them a chance to develop and take part new technology and everything that comes with it. And it will definitely be a step towards a new learning environment. I hope this report comes to a useful tool when establishing for a new Learning centre. The discussion I had with focus groups and single interviews could help them create a learning centre designed by students.
8 Glossary

BTH             Blekinge Institute of Technology
DoCH            Department of Community Health
ICT             Information Communication Technology
LC              Learning centre
LU              Lund University
LL              Learning Lab
MUST            Mbarara University of Science and Technology

9 References


10 Websites

http://www.sfih.lu.se/minnesanteckningar/020513%20utbytesprojekt.htm

http://www.ui.se/fakta/afrika/uganda.htm

http://www.must.8m.net/organisatio.html
11 Appendix

LUMUST STUDENT EXCHANGE PROGRAMME 2004
LUMUST Student Exchange Programme är ett utbytes program mellan läkarstudenter vid Lunds Universitet och Mbarara University of Science and Technology i Uganda.

Studentutbytet är en del av ett Sida-finansierat samarbete mellan Samhällsmedicinska Institutionen och Department of Community Health i Mbarara.

Du som går i termin 10 på läkarutbildningen vid Lunds Universitet och är intresserad av att skriva ditt fördjupningsarbete i Uganda är välkommen att söka stipendium för att delta i studentutbytet. Det finns tre stipendier för svenska studenter och tre för ugandiska studenter.

Stipendiet täcker kostnader för resa och omkostnader för fyra veckors vistelse i Uganda.

Sista ansökningsdatum: 1 februari, 2004

Är du intresserad av att veta mera?

Kontakta:

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eller

Jerker Liljestrand
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12 Appendix

Schedule for Carolina Olsson

- Arrival in Mbarara 25th Feb 2004
- Meeting with Gad to have schedule for activities 26th Feb 2004
- Work on the interview schedule and FGDs
- Draft a schedule with Martha and Gad

- Visit the university departments 27th Feb 2004
  Library, DoCh, Dean FoM
- Discuss interview and FGD question
- Discuss with library about Makerere University

- Study at guest house 28th Feb 2004

- Visit church 29th Feb 2004
- Study at Sida guest house

- Spend some time in the library 1st March 2004
- Meet Planner (Peace) 11.00am
- Meet Librarian (Anna) 2.00pm
- Meet MPH students 4.00pm

- Meet the Technician (Kelly) 8.30pm 2nd March 2004
- Meet the Dean of Medical Faculty 9.30am

- Meet Technician Kelly 8.00am 03rd March 2004
- Meet Gad 9.00am
- Meet Female group 10.00am

- Write up and discuss with project team 04th March 2004

- Meet Theodora 10.00am 05th March 2004
- Write up

- Visit to Queen Elizabeth

- 7th-10th March Summarize of material

- Departure to the Airport 11th March 2004
13 Appendix

Interview question

Questionnaire
The main purpose with this questionnaire is to survey what the Learning centre will be used for and who will have access to the Learning centre.

1. What are your expectations with the Learning Centre?
2. Do you think you will develop your knowledge future?
3. What would you need the learning centre for?
   a) Study
   b) Net base courses
   c) Information seek
   d) Other
4. How do you consider your competence in computer usage?
5. How do you consider your competence in information seek on the web?
6. How do you find information when you are studying?
   a) Internet
   b) Books
   c) Journals
   d) Audio/CD/Video
7. How many hours do you plan to spend in the Learning Centre each day?
8. Does your study require any privacy?
   - Yes
   - No
9. Do you need any specific programs on the computers in your study?
10) In the future, What courses will the learning centre be used for?
11) What do you consider missing in the all ready existing computer learning centre?
14 Appendix

Focus groups questions

The main purpose with the focus groups will be to discuss the Learning centre and the needs behind the LC.

What would be the main purpose with the learning centre?

What would you need the Internet connection for?
- Information seek
- E-mailing
- Chat
- E-journal

How do you want the computers placed at the learning centre?

Will it be important that every person who are using the Learning centre has its own username and password to enter the computer?

How would you like the learning centre to be managed?

In our opinion, who will ensure the learning centre will be used for its intended purpose?

In our opinion, which member of staff will need access to the learning centre?
15 Appendix

Summarize of Interview- and Focus group question

1 March: Peace Planning Department
The meeting started with a summarize of the last meeting which was held 2002 with the LC working group. The aim with the meeting was to discuss about the possibilities to establish a new Learning Centre at the University Library at Mbarara University of Science and Technology.

On the base of the questions which I had prepared we discussed the organization behind the Learning Centre, the needs, security, usability and sustainability.

Organization
Every department at MUST will appoint a representative which will form the Learning centre group.

![Kommité diagram](image)

The reason why all departments should be represented is to have collaboration between the departments. It is important to have representatives from a broad area to be able to have opinion from every one. Mrs. Peace considers it is a benefit to collaborate with the department of computer science if there are any problems with the Learning centre.

Needs
The needs around the Learning centre are of course computers and a good Internet connection. But there is also a need for students and staff to develop their computer knowledge, especially staff.
Guiding Manuals will be necessary for students and staff which is not familiar with the Learning centers environment. With structured manual about Microsoft Windows, Information search and Internet Explorer students and staff will be able to work independent.

*Security*

One of the most important parts around the Learning centre is the security around the Learning centre. Mrs. Peace proposed that a permanently staff should be hired to be able to control the Learning centre and make sure that the Learning centre is used for its main purpose.

(Demand of managed will be hired)

All the students and staff which are using the Learning centre needs a username and a password to be able to enter and use the computers. This will also secure so no unauthorized enter the Learning centre. This is also an advantage for the students who want to save their work on their own account.

*Recommendation*

Mrs. Peace recommended that students under all departments should be able to use the learning centre to avoid that only a small group is prioritized.

**Focus groups male MPH-students:**

Participants:
Apolla
Mabumba
Edson

1. *What are your expectations with the Learning Centre?*
   Access to databases and resources, fast Internet connection and able to develop their computer knowledge.

2. *Do you think you will develop your computer knowledge further?*
   Yes, but we need help to develop and expand our. It would be good to have computer lessons at the Learning centre where students and staff can contribute.

3. *What would you need the Learning centre for?*
   We would need it mostly for Internet search and writing. For the moment they write their essays on the base of abstracts. To be able to access full text databases will make the work easy for the students.
4 How do you consider your competence in computer usage?
Because of the lack of computers, computers are not a natural part in our lives. When we are able to use a computer we use it mainly for e-mailing and writing.

5 How do you consider your competence in information seek on the web?
We mostly use Google and free databases on the web but the majority of the information we found is not scientific. It would be necessary to be able to access databases and relevant information on the web.

6 How do you find information when you are studying?
Mostly textbooks, but they are old and not up to date.

7 How many hours do you plan to spend in the Learning centre each day?
We are finished with our study but the students and staff which are going to use the learning centre in the future will probably spend several hours in the Learning centre.

8 Does your study require any privacy?
Our study does not require any privacy but you never know if it will in the future. It would be good to have the computers installed so if there is necessary students and staff can work private.

9 In your study do your need any specific software programs on the computers.
Our study does not require any specific programs apart from the databases.

10 What do you consider missing in the all ready existing computer resource center (Sida-guest house)
More computers

Focus groups female medical students: 1: st year to 5: th year
Participants:
Emelie 4th year
Anna 3rd year
Edna 3rd year
Rosemarie 5th year
Elenyo 3rd year

1 What are your expectations with the Learning Centre?
As medical students we would like to access medical information from databases. Journals and other scientific periodical were we can find the
latest information. For the moment we base our work on old books which are not up to date. We would also like to access MedOnline.

2 Do you think you will develop your computer knowledge further? Of course, but we would need help. None of us has pre knowledge in computer usage and working with computers. It would be good to participate in some kind of computer lesson were we can get basic computer knowledge.

It would be necessary to limit the time for how long a person can use a computer. It is common that boys use the computers more than girls and not let us use the computers.

If there is a limited time for how long you can use a computer it would be fair and equally divided between boys and girls.

3 What would you need the Learning centre for? We would need it to access information from the Internet. It would be grate to be able to share experience with other medical students around the world and read about the latest within the medical area. To be able to give as many students as possible the chance to access information on the Web it would be good to have a printer where we can print the information and read it in a quiet place. The Learning centre could be divided into two parts, one reading part and one computer part.

4 How do you consider your competence in computer usage? The young medical students have slightly less computer knowledge while the 4th and 5th year medical students have some experience in computer usage. The computer lab is always fully booked and the Internet connection is slow. The only time we can access the Internet is in town at the Internet Café. But this is expensive and we only use it to check our e-mail.

5 How do you consider your competence in information seek on the web? Since we don’t use computers daily, it is difficult for us to know about information search. Two of the medical students have used Google but it is difficult because of the slow Internet connection.

6 How do you find information when you are studying? Mostly from books but they are old and not up to date.

7 How many ours do you plan to spend in the Learning centre each day?
Since we are undergraduate students we are not able to access to the Learning Centre but post graduated students will probably spend as much time as they can. It is a grate opportunity and a good chance to develop.

8 Does your study require any privacy?
We think it’s important to study in privacy because sometimes you don’t want other students to look at your work. As medical students we would like to read about diseases and some student may not be comfortable with this.

9 In your study do your need any specific software programs on the computers.
MedOnline, AJOL, databases and medical journals.
Computers which can read CD-discs. It would be good to be able to burn CDs and share pictures with other medical students around the world. (For example Images of surgeries, images of different diseases and pictures of the latest medical equipment.

10 What do you consider missing in the all ready existing computer resource center (Sida-guest house)
Since we do not have accessibility the Sida-guest house we don’t know what’s missing. But what we can see there could be some more computers and space. For the moment there are only three computers. This makes it limited for how many students that can use the Sida guest house.
It will be different in the new Learning Centre because the computers will increase and so will the space.
16 Appendix

Meeting with Librarian Anna Gallibayo

Recommendation

To further demonstrate the libraries and indeed the Universities enthusiasm or passion for the use of Information Technology, I wish to elaborate on what’s on the ground. Currently we have six PC workstations for our clients including and students of the university. There is no single time that these PC’s are not in use. We have had problems on how to cope with an ever increasing demand for service. Owning to this, the lab always closes late.

In a nutshell, there is a growing awareness and a realization among students and staff of Mbarara University that Information Technology is a key enabler in securing business success. Therefore in the modern era ICT is an indispensable tool for education and research. The need for this service in the university far exceeds the supply and indeed the idea of establishing a learning lab at the very university where everyone is desperately longing for it is not only a dream come true but also a timely intervention from our development partners.

Organization and Structure
Alredy, the library has earmarked a room capable of holding up to 20 PC workstations to house the proposed Learning lab facility.

The facility will be under the direct supervision of the library management in conjunction with the department of community health. Priority to use the lab will be given to post graduated students especially from the department of community health.

The university administration has a commitment to set aside funds to maintain and ensure continued use of the service well after the initial installation period.
Needs of the Learning Lab
(1) PC work stations about 20 or more
(2) Laptops for administrators and fieldwork (5)
(3) Heavy duty network printer (1)
(4) Scanner (1)
(5) Digital camera (1)
(6) Heavy Duty photo copier (1)
(7) All the necessary software (such as operating systems, anti virus software, etc)
(8) Funds for subscribing to electronic journals purchase of CD-ROM databases etc, software licenses, allowances for some core staff.
(9) Stand by computer technician (1)
(10) Surfing assistant
(11) Training for core staff either in Sweden or organized locally and instructions conducted by Swedish experts.
(12) Exchange visits between Mbarara University Learning Lab and Learning Labs in Sweden to share experience.
(13) Furnishing the rooms including provisions of modern office furniture, chairs, desks, tables, carpets, etc
(14) Air conditioning
(15) UPS
17 Appendix

Draft planning

Establishment of a Learning Centre

Objectives
To map out the perceptions on the organization and structure of the Learning Centre.
To map out the perceptions of securing user-friendliness.
To map out the needs in the Learning Centre.
To identify the key factors for sustainability of a Learning Centre.

Methods
Nine semi-structured interviews will be held with the following individuals:
Five staff members from department of community health
Anna Gallibayo, Librarian, MUST.
Kelly, Technical staff, MUST.
Peace, Staff from planning department
Dr. Jerome Kabauyenga, Dean of medical faculty.
Dr. Amadi Ihunho, substitute for Dr. Jerome Kabauyenga.

Two focus group discussions will be held. One group will be held with 5-6 male students and one group with 5-6 female students. The groups are compound MPH and medical-students.
The interviews will focus on the following themes:
• Organization and structure of the Learning Centre.
• User friendliness
• Needs
• Recommendations
• Security