

PONT

April 2008 Update on University of Glamorgan Developments

1. Mathematics Visit To Mbale 2008

On 27th June 2008 11 mathematics students from the University of Glamorgan will be visiting Mbale in Uganda for 11 days. During this time they will participate in classroom activities providing assistance in mathematics. They will both watch and help the Ugandan teachers and assist classes that I and a qualified teacher in the group will be taking. Some will take classes in football and netball. They will also be helping to get a teacher resource centre operational, through the cataloging of equipment. It is currently disused. A number of activities of cultural exchange are being arranged. It is hoped this learning experience will also inspire the students and build relationships with the people of Mbale.

John Hayward
Mathematics and Statistics
Advanced Technology

2. Energy and Fuel

Improving the Health & Standard of Living of Rural Communities in Africa with Efficient Low Cost Vegetable Oil Candle Lamps and Cooking Stoves.

A suitable low-cost technology which can enable rural population to utilise locally produced oils for domestic lighting and energy use can reduce their reliance on polluting and potentially non-sustainable and hazardous fuel sources, thus stimulating the village economy and relieving pressure on natural resources such as wood and other fossil fuels.

Currently, voluntary work is being carried out by a number of staff from the Department of Engineering to prepare a number of working prototypes for the coming visit to Uganda (together with other members of PONT), at the end of May 2008. The primary objective of the visit is to conduct some ground studies on the potential socio-economic issues of the implementation.

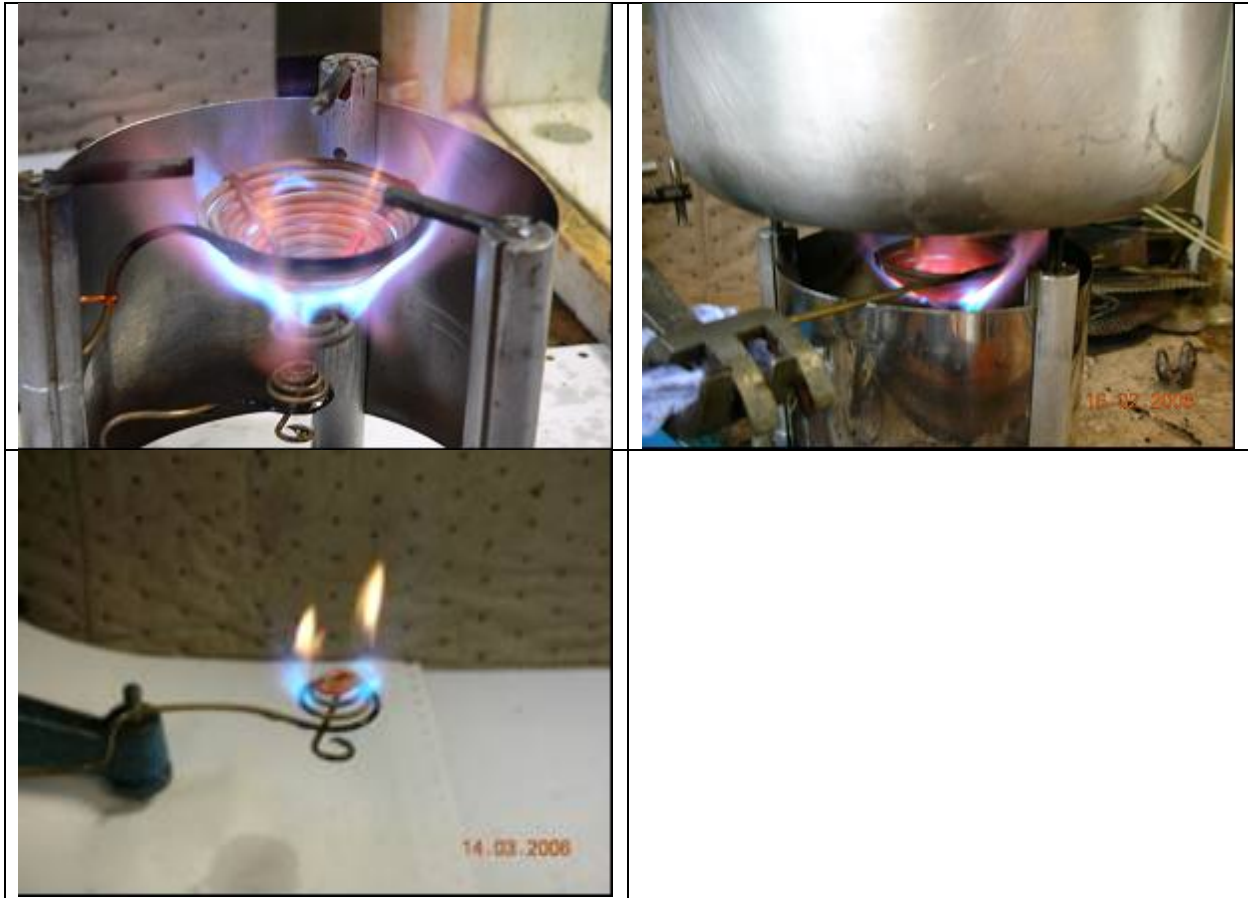


Figure 1: Laboratory trial of the Vegetable-oil Candle Lamp and Cooking Stove

*Alex Chong and CK Tan
Department of Engineering
Faculty of Advanced Technology
University of Glamorgan*

3. Habitat for Humanity

Andrew Ware from the Department of Computing and Mathematical Sciences has taken two groups of University of Glamorgan students to work in Uganda building houses under the auspice of Habitat for Humanity.

*Andrew Ware
Department of Computing and Mathematical Sciences
Faculty of Advanced Technology
University of Glamorgan*

4. Construction Blocks, and Road Surfaces

My first visit to Mbale in October/November 2007 aimed to establish contacts and determine whether the possibility existed of applying my geological background to development in the area.

Two projects are emerging: one, specified by the engineering section of the local authority, concerns degradation of road surfaces in the approaches to schools where there is a school bus service. Having read around examples in other areas of the developing world it is apparent that potentially low-cost alternatives are many and varied, based on locally available materials. It is hoped to be able experiment with alternative surfacing materials and techniques at a suitable location in the Mbale area.

The second project is presently being discussed with Professor David Jenkins in AT and concerns unfired, cement-stabilised construction blocks being produced by NGOs as an income-generating activity. The quality of these varies dependent on soil quality, which in turn varies the amount of cement used. It is considered possible that a change in the process may result in lower usage of cement. There may also be scope for substitution of some of the binder with waste material.

Since the November visit I have become aware of an appropriate technology centre in Mbale and on my return there in June 2008 this will be a definite port of call which will link in well with the above projects.

It is worth making the point that whatever individual projects we are interested in, there is much cross-fertilisation of ideas. Also no solution is straightforward in development and cultural, economic and social factors enter all aspects of the work.

Marga Quince
Senior Lecturer/Geological Curator
Faculty of Health, Sports and Science

5. PONT Conference

The Faculty of Health, Sport & Science (HESAS) was the first point of contact between the University of Glamorgan and the PONT project. A small co-ordinating group was set up to examine potential areas of collaboration between the Faculty and PONT. Over time, it became apparent that due to the wide range of activities in Mbale embraced by PONT that a wider University involvement would be beneficial. Representation from other Faculties on the co-ordinating group was sought and secured and a University level co-ordinator identified. The Faculty organized a successful conference in late Autumn 2007. It included Assembly members, Mbale visitors, RCT officials and University staff; over 160 delegates from the RCT region attended, and the event successfully showcased the work of PONT and potential collaborative activity with the University.

6. Health Care and Community Health Training

HESAS involvement, including contributions from several members of staff, has, to date, been primarily health orientated – beginning with the management and prevention of malaria and the use of mosquito nets in order to reduce morbidity rates amongst children. It is clear, however, that there are many other areas of expertise within the Faculty that could be engaged with this project.

Alwyn Pugh, from HeSaS, has made two visits to Mbale to advise on the training of the community health workers. Ruth Davis has visited to teach and explore potential links for the future. These include links with social work (Mbale Study Centre), working with local midwives and NGOs to train traditional birth attendants, student placements, health promotion, learning disabilities, mental health and developing chronic disease management. A joint paper on diabetes is already being prepared for publication.

*Ruth Davies
Head of Care Sciences,
Faculty of Health, Sports and Science,
University of Glamorgan*

7. Geography Field Course

Dr. Tony Harris and others from Department of Science and Sport (HeSaS) are looking into the viability of Mbale as a residential field course venue for Geography and other Earth Science students. A field course would enable students to study development in the field as part of the undergraduate degree teaching provision providing valuable experience and opening up valuable and worthwhile employment or future opportunities. There are also many possibilities for building research links in the field of development studies. This is likely to involve a reconnaissance visit in the near future with the view to holding a residential field course in the following academic year.

*Dr. Anthony J. Harris
Department of Science and Sport
Faculty of Health, Sports and Science
University of Glamorgan*

8. Glamorgan Outreach

Glamorgan Outreach (GO) offers off-campus learning opportunities (courses) for learners of all ages, from all backgrounds and all walks of life. Working in partnership with a wide range of community centre locations throughout South East Wales – it is the section of the university which deals with learning in the community which includes community related projects. GO can facilitate a local community PONT workshop or seminar within

the Taff Ely area, led by RCT and University staff who have experience of PONT and who would like to disseminate developments to a wider audience of adult learners.

Dr Rob Payne, Director of Glamorgan Outreach, Centre for Lifelong Learning

9. First Campus

First Campus offers Primary and Comprehensive school children, between the ages of 10 and 16, the opportunity to engage in aspiration and awareness-raising workshops about higher education pathways and opportunities. It is a partnership led by the University of Glamorgan and including Cardiff University, the University of Wales Newport, the Open University in Wales, and UWIC. The consortium is well placed to contribute to the objectives of the PONT Schools initiative through engaging faculty-based academics and their students in projects and event which introduce issues of poverty, health and cultural development in Africa to the next generation of school children. First Campus designs awareness-raising workshops, and is keen to explore potential links between the increasingly popular Welsh Baccalaureate's *Wales Europe and the World* curriculum and PONT projects which use higher education resources.

*Jane Ellis
First Campus
Centre for Lifelong Learning
University of Glamorgan*

10. Technology, Construction and Management

Development projects require careful consideration prior to inception, together with rigorous monitoring and evaluation. A framework for project selection and analysis requires shared principles and metrics for sustainable community development including, in the Ugandan context, pro-poor growth. The University is in dialogue with colleagues in Mbale to agree such principles for the PONT/ Mbale coalition.

The informal settlement at Namatala is among the very poorest areas of Mbale. Visits in October 2007 and May 2008 are focussed on community engagement to elicit priorities for projects that will assist in achieving Millennium Development Goal Target 11, indicators 31 and 32 (Proportion of population with access to improved sanitation and Proportion of households with access to secure tenure).

*Professor David Jenkins
Environmental Technology, Construction & Management
Faculty of Advanced Technology
University of Glamorgan*

11. Some Suggested Future Developments in Support of PONT

- Planning a new major-minor curriculum and qualification pathway for undergraduates who have an interest in the developing world, African Studies, and globalization.
- Developing work experience projects, field trips, placements and dissertations which prepare University graduates for future careers in charity and voluntary work.
- Linking HESAS Police Science expertise within the University of Glamorgan with police services in Mbale. Two lecturers within HESAS – Stewart Simpson and Stewart Twig - have in recent years established police training programmes in sub-Saharan countries.
- Piloting a payroll-giving scheme where donations are made by staff to a PONT charitable account that would then sponsor PONT projects and visits.
- Establishing a formally constituted University of Glamorgan PONT cross-faculty and corporate department coordinating committee.
- Use of expertise within HASS in order to develop TEFL pathways and initiatives, embedding PONT within a broader international strategy for the University.
- Involving CeLL, CELT and HASS Education staff in advisory work associated with establishing an education and lifelong learning resource centre in Mbale.
- Making connections between the University chaplaincy and the faith networks associated with PONT partnerships.
- Preparing research bids supported by the Research Office, and encouraging academic staff to apply for the UNESCO Chairs scheme .
- Dovetailing PONT opportunities for undergraduates with “the student experience” initiative.
- Linking PONT with community regeneration, housing association, and credit union research expertise in HASS and the Business School.
- Advanced Technology projects on solar power and sustainable energy production within villages which currently have no electricity.
- Computing applications for engineering challenges surrounding water production, storage, and distribution.