

City Building Report, 2019.

Background

A team from City Building spent two weeks during the month of September in Malawi, based in the capital, Lilongwe.

The purpose of the visit was to carry the refurbishment of the 500 Miles Prosthetics and Orthotics Clinic, at Kamuzu Central Hospital, which City Building had constructed in 2010.

This was the fifth time that City Building has been involved with humanitarian projects in Malawi.

Since opening back in 2010, the clinic has been an amazing success, providing prosthetic limbs and orthotic devices to over 10,000 people within the local community and surrounding areas.

As a result of the popularity and continuous use of the clinic, its internal and external facilities had deteriorated over time. This meant it was in need of extensive and effective work so that it could continue to accommodate the large number of patients who utilize the facility on a daily basis.

Project Team

The City Building team included three 4th year apprentices, Phoebe Ali, Cameron Moir and Craig Butler. The apprentices were also accompanied by Shelley Sutherland, Electrician, Graham Robb and Martin Bredin, Construction Managers, and myself, Scott McEwan, Malawi Project Leader. Each of the apprentices was chosen following a rigorous selection process including consideration of how they had performed throughout their apprenticeship.



Project Delivery

After a longer than expected journey, the team arrived in Malawi on the afternoon of Tuesday 3rd September. Following a quick change and freshen up, the team travelled to locate their materials which had been shipped from Glasgow and were being stored in a warehouse on the outskirts of Lilongwe.

Those of us, who had previously been to Malawi, could not believe the difference in Lilongwe since our last visit in 2013. The population had nearly doubled in size, resulting in traffic chaos throughout the city.

On arrival at the warehouse the team were pleasantly surprised that all of our materials had arrived safely and arrangements were made with the warehouse owner to transport them to the hospital grounds over the following days.

We returned to the hotel for a well-earned rest and for some pizza, which turned out to be our staple diet for the duration of our stay! An early night was had by all to allow us to make an early start in the morning to try and catch up on lost time due to the travel issues which we had experienced.

Upon arriving at the clinic the following morning, we were welcomed by the Clinic Manager, Bernard, along with his staff. Everyone was delighted to see us arrive as they knew themselves how much work required to be completed for a successful restoration of the clinic. They also recognized the importance of the work we would be doing due to the positive impact it was having on so many people's lives.

The clinic had had little maintenance carried out on the facility since City Building completed it in 2010. It was in a poor state of repair and required a major overhaul.

Over the next nine days, the City Building team worked relentlessly around the clock to refurbish the clinic, which included full internal and external decoration, new plumbing and electrics, new air conditioning and ventilation systems, new handrails and mirrors along with the introduction of soft furnishings, which included new seating within the reception area.

Local Malawian labour, working alongside the City Building team, assisted in delivering the project, and on its completion, excess tools and materials were gifted to the clinic to help them maintain the building over the coming years.

The clinic staff were delighted with the finished product, and to personally witness the first young patient using the refurbished facility, was a truly momentous and emotional occasion that will live with all the City Building team for many a year to come.



Summary

It was a privilege to once again head up a team from City Building and work alongside other

departments from Glasgow City Council in delivering this humanitarian project in Malawi. All involved worked together, in what was a fantastic team effort.

This was only possible due to the support provided by other colleagues within City Building and our supply chain in providing the necessary support mechanisms to deliver this project.

Our apprentices made a short video of their experience in supporting this work which can be viewed at www.citybuildingglasgow.co.uk

Scott McEwan
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