

## Student Project in Malawi 2016

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I had a chance to check in with last year's site of our x-ray room installation, the Karonga District Hospital, and during the 12 month since our installation, they took over 5,000 radiographs. Considering that they did not have functioning x-ray equipment since 2011 and the patients had to travel to other sites to get x-rayed, we saved the patients and accompanying guardians about 25 Million Malawi Kwacha, the equivalent of US\$ 35,000, and this is over and beyond the medical benefits.



Fig. 1: Small-group tutoring of the x-ray course.

We were able to complete the project on time (Fig. 2), so the hand-over ceremony was being conducted as scheduled. This was a special event, lasting most of the day with visiting the x-ray room, explaining the accomplishments of the project, listening to endless speeches of hospital and community representatives (I think my speech was the shortest), and enjoying traditional dances, songs and sketches (Fig. 3). This community was extraordinarily welcoming and appreciated the help we were able to provide them. It was very clear that the hospital as well as the neighboring secondary girls school were very well managed.



Fig. 2: Completed x-ray room at the day of the hand-over. The x-ray tube is suspended from the ceiling, and the low-cost digital image receiver is the blue box below it.

The Nkhamenya Secondary Girls School allowed our students to closely interact and become friends with the local girls. Apart from helping as teaching assistants in the computer class, they had multiple opportunities to get together socially. Our team of female engineers was certainly an inspiration of what girls can achieve, and tears flowed when the time came to depart.

On weekends and a few days before departure, we took the opportunity to enjoy some culture sites as well as wildlife and nature. As most of this year's participants had seen places in the northern region of Malawi, we concentrated this time more on the middle and southern region (Figs. 4-6).



Fig. 3: Traditional dances at the hand-over ceremony.



Fig. 4: Mua Mission, site of the premier wood-carving school in Malawi.



Fig. 5: Ancient Baobab tree by Cape McClear.



Fig. 5: Liwonde National Park.



Fig. 5: Dedza, where ancient cave paintings can be seen.



Fig. 6: Zomba Plateau with numerous streams and water falls.