



# IT SCHOOLS AFRICA

*Transforming lives through access to e-Learning*

## Report on FDYD disabled centre IT Lab

Ref: FF489

### **Introduction**

In June 2019 Fondation Eagle kindly donated £24,956 to IT Schools Africa to construct a computer lab classroom for a disabled centre in Blantyre, Malawi.

### **How we used the grant**

The grant was used to build an IT classroom at the Forum for Development of Youth with Disability (FDYD) Disabled Centre. The classroom is 14m x 6m with a sidewalk and facilitates an IT lab with appropriate electrical infrastructure, ceiling, floor tiles, furniture and 30 networked desktop computers, laptop for the teacher, headphones, laser printer, internet for 6 months, scanner, heavy duty locks, door protectors, window protectors and some stationery and teacher training for their two IT teachers.

By building a facility specifically for disabled youths and children to gain digital skills will help them to improve their educational and employment prospects.

### **The project**

FDYD is a well-established community based education centre for disabled children and young adults in the township of Bangwe in Blantyre. The project was undertaken by Computers for Malawian Schools (CFMS), IT Schools Africa's implementing partner in Malawi.

#### Constructing the classroom

Work commenced promptly and, as usual, was finished in good time. The total project took just 8 weeks from start to finish. Key tasks that were completed included:

##### *Laying the foundations*

The site of the building is opposite the front of the Centre's existing building, so once complete the fronts of both buildings will face each other.





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## *Building the exterior walls*

The main Centre building is at the bottom of a slope, the new lab is just off the main road, and there is now driveway access to both buildings.



## *Installing the roof*





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## *Installing the secure windows*

As standard, burglar bars are fitted to all of the windows and a grille door is fitted



## *Plastering the walls and installing the ceiling*

A sky light was installed to give extra light to the building.





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## *Wiring the lab*

The wiring is installed as the classroom is being built and completed after the plastering.



## *Tiling the floor and fixing the furniture*



## *The finishing touches*

Flower beds were added and the driveway was properly finished for wheelchair access.





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The front and back of the new IT lab.



## *Installing the equipment and teacher training*

The 30 computers were installed and networked, as well as the teacher's laptop, printer, scanner, projector, headphones and internet subscription for 6 months.

We've provided special keyboards for the visually impaired as well as braille stickers for 5 keyboards. Specialist software is also provided, including programmes for typing, screen readers and voice recognition, as well as our standard software Windows 10 and Libre Office preinstalled as well as educational content such as Kahn Academy, Blockly Games (for computer programming).

After the lab was completed our trainer delivered teacher training for the two IT teachers from the centre.



## *The opening ceremony*

5 (FF489)

December 2019



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The lab was officially handed over on Monday 21st October 2019. It is a major upgrade of the facilities at FDYD.

Co-founders Rex and Fatima Kalima, Sabina and her husband Sam Kulasinghe and Mrs Manduwa from advocacy organisation, Parents of Disabled Children Association of Malawi (PODCAM) were among local members of the community who attended the ceremony. The lab was well received by the community especially on how it will benefit young, disabled people.



## Case study

Name: Omega Mlonya

Gender: Female

Age: 23

Disability: epileptic

Starting a computer class at FDYD's new IT lab has helped Omega to improve her computer skills and help her to feel a bit more motivated. Before then Omega stayed at home with nothing to do but now she is able to use computer programmes like Microsoft Word and Excel.

She was excited to tell her two friends who are also disabled so they can come and start learning about computers.





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## Financial report

Actual costs for the construction of IT Lab - SUMMARY				
EXCHANGE RATE GBP TO MALAWI KWACHA	940			
Description	Price (Mk)	Price (GBP)	Actual (Mk)	Actual (GBP)
Timber	5,462,505	5,811	6,553,116	6,971
Roofing	2,251,820	2,396	2,325,500	2,474
Ceiling work	1,164,200	1,239	964,550	1,026
Welding and glazing (windows and doors)	631,100	671	1,045,889	1,113
Ironmongery	15,700	17	16,000	17
Fabrication of fixtures & fittings	655,200	697	450,000	479
Electrical work	1,670,390	1,777	1,660,778	1,767
Painting & decorating	865,580	921	700,800	746
Furniture (ready made)	1,246,900	1,326	168,600	179
Tiling	975,400	1,038	1,038,000	1,104
Hire of equipment	340,000	362	200,000	213
<b>Total</b>	<b>15,278,795</b>	<b>16,254</b>	<b>15,123,233</b>	<b>16,088</b>
Actual costs for IT installation - SUMMARY				
EXCHANGE RATE GBP TO MALAWI KWACHA	940			
Description	Price (Mk)	Price (GBP)	Actual (Mk)	Actual (GBP)
Classroom refurbishment	624,000	664	241,950	257
Computer equipment (and software)	5,106,700	5,433	4,680,060	4,979
Internet and networking	619,500	659	824,345	877
Project Management	900,000	957	1,052,000	1,119
Technical support	460,000	489	660,000	702
Planning, monitoring and evaluating	470,000	500	470,000	500
<b>Total</b>	<b>8,180,200</b>	<b>8,702</b>	<b>7,928,355</b>	<b>8,434</b>
<b>Grand total</b>	<b>23,458,995</b>	<b>24,956</b>	<b>23,051,588</b>	<b>24,523</b>

The project was under budget, with an underspend of £433. The timber was more expensive than budgeted for as were the windows and doors. Security is a priority and Sabina wanted to ensure the room will be well secured. Less was spent on the chairs for the room, as only 20 instead of 30 were bought, this was to make space for the students in wheelchairs.



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## Conclusion

The project went very well, Sabina's team have done an amazing job of creating a wonderful facility for disabled children and adults. We made some additions to what was originally planned, surfacing the area between the centre and the new lab, putting in flower beds and widening the entrance to the site for vehicles.

So many people have been involved to make this a truly special project, including Sam, Sabina's husband who was involved with the IT installation. We were delighted to see the finished project and to know that so much good will come from this project.

Fatima and Rex are inspirational and serve as great role models for the disabled community. They greatly impressed our Chair, Michael Ratcliffe when he visited their centre in February 2017. To see the development since then is overwhelming and I'd like to thank you and the trustees personally for making such a generous contribution.

With warm regards

Lucy Pollock

General Manager

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