

Harry Jackson-Smith (medical student)

My time in Tanzania has been the highlight of my degree so far. I never expected to learn and experience so much from so many people on this long-awaited trip. To be honest, I had absolutely no idea what to expect when I arrived in Dar Es Salaam. This was, after all, my first time visiting any hospital (in my capacity as a medical student) in any country. I was extremely nervous despite failed attempts to convince myself it was bridled excitement. The week was to be, in many regards, a week of firsts. A fact which quickly became a running joke amongst the Oxford global surgery team, what with me being the youngest (and to Fungai's disdain, the tallest). Amongst these new experiences were; my first time in Africa, my first time putting on a scrub cap (all be it the wrong way around at first), my first time in theatre, my first time learning to build a partnership, my first papaya and drinking my first coconut. The whole week turned out to be a sensory and cognitive bonanza, all I seemed to have to do was keep my ears and eyes open. This is testament to the people I was surrounded by both from the Tanzanian and Oxford sides. It was wonderful to witness the blossoming of partnerships and friendships. I can honestly say it was a privilege to be a part of this trip and of this team. I entered Tanzania with a bag full of smuggled stoma bags and have left with a zest for medicine, a head full of inspiration and a great bunch of friends.

