



FOL Newsletter

Fountain of Life

INTRODUCING THE MZUZU AND ZOMBA ONE STOP CENTRES

ISSUE 12 (The OSC Issue)



ABOVE: The Mzuzu OSC at Mzuzu Central Hospital

We reported previously in our newsletters that UNICEF partnered with FOL to replicate the Queen Elizabeth Hospital One Stop Centre model in Blantyre to three more OSCs; the Mzuzu OSC, Zomba OSC and Lilongwe OSC.

The Mzuzu OSC finished construction in 2014 but was not yet launched up until June 2016 when it was officially launched by the Minister of Health.

The Mzuzu OSC is now fully functional. All the essential service providers namely medical officer, counsellor, social welfare officer and police officer are always available at the center to help victims of defilement, rape and sexual assault in general.

Did You Know?

- The Zomba One Stop Centre is the oldest OSC building – the one that finished first but is not yet operating at full capacity.
- Some Police Officers have been trained to become Victim Support officers to respond and help victims of GBV effectively.
- Lilongwe district has the highest number of sexual assault cases, which are referred to Kamuzu Central Hospital but the OSC is still not finished.

The Zomba OSC is one of the first and oldest OSCs to be built and it was launched as part of the National launch of all OSCs when Mzuzu OSC was being launched in June 2016.

Unlike the Blantyre and Mzuzu OSC, the Zomba OSC would not be called fully functional since the medical officers, social welfare officer and police officer are usually not available, they are called in when needed and depends on circumstance and availability if they do show up. FOL has volunteer counselors present on all weekdays to provide basic trauma counselling to the victims.

On a regular day all OSCs open by 8am and close at 4:30pm. At the moment Zomba sees an average of 2 clients per day while Mzuzu has an average of 4 clients per day.



ABOVE: The Zomba OSC at Zomba Central Hospital

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FOUNTAIN OF LIFE PARTNERS WITH AREA 3 POLICE (LILONGWE) VICTIM SUPPORT UNIT



ABOVE: Day of the open day FOL organized with the Police in 2013

In 2013, Fountain of Life hosted an open day with Police Officers mainly from the Victim Support Unit initiative to establish ways in which the police can respond effectively and help victims of sexual violence. Ever since that event, FOL has been trying to work with the Police, especially the Area 3 Victim Support Unit which is near our office, and Kamuzu Central Hospital. They have an ideal victim support facility.

At the quarterly stake holders meeting in August, FOL expressed their concern that in Lilongwe they are having a hard time offering trauma counselling services to victims because the OSC is not yet built. Sergeant Mbewe offered FOL space at the Area 3 VSU and for three weeks now FOL counsellors have been providing counselling services to victims four days a week (**Monday–Thursday**).

FOL has also been given a room at Kamuzu Central Hospital where counsellors provide trauma counselling to sexual assault victims, once a week (**every Friday**).

Meanwhile, as of 30th September 2016, construction of the Lilongwe One Stop Centre at Kamuzu Central Hospital has resumed and it seems to be in the final finishing phase (**See below**). The foreman was not on site to provide information on when exactly the building will be finished all together but so far there is visible evidence that there is progress following the report we gave three months ago. Construction was expected to be finished in February 2016 but we hope it will be finished by the end of 2016.



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“HELPING THE VICTIMS OF SEXUAL ASSAULT RE-BUILD THEIR LIVES”