



FOL Newsletter

Fountain of Life

CONGOMA NGO WEEK 2016

ISSUE 13

The Council for NGOs in Malawi (CONGOMA) organized the NGO Week 2016 at Masintha Community Ground in Lilongwe. The theme was **"Breaking the cycle of poverty in Malawi: What is the role of NGOs?"**

The aim of the NGO week is to mobilize all NGOs that are registered with the NGO board and CONGOMA to show case their work to the audience and other NGOs. It is also a chance for NGOs to connect and see where they can partner and work together. This year the event was held at Masintha ground and not at a corporate venue as a way of taking the event to the people (community) where they can know the NGOs working in the country, the services or products they provide.

The guest of honor was the United Nations Resident Coordinator, Mia Seppo who stopped by each booth. The event was carried out from 26th–28th October 2016.



Above: The FOL booth

SCHOOL AWARENESS CAMPAIGN IN BLANTYRE



Most of the victims that come in at the One Stop Centers are below the age of sixteen (16). At this age children spend most of their time either at home (community) or school. Besides carrying out awareness campaigns in communities to target community leaders, parents and guardians, carrying out awareness campaigns in schools is a great way to reach out to the children directly. The campaign also targets the teachers who are viewed as second parents by the children and are the next best thing to report to if sexual assault happens.

FOL carried out awareness campaigns in Blantyre about defilement, and rape

focusing on the services available for victims at the moment in Blantyre which is the One Stop Centre at Queen Elizabeth Hospital.

The schools targeted were community day secondary schools which are around Queen Elizabeth Hospital. Twelve schools were selected, Three (3) schools were visited in a day for six (6) days from 26th November to 2nd December 2016.

Most of the students were eager to learn about the services available but also raised concerns about other forms of child abuse besides defilement and rape. Several students reported child labor, harmful cultural practices and physical abuse.

FOL is dedicated to reach as many people as possible through awareness campaigns which will help people report more cases and receive effective help available at the One Stop Centers.

Did You Know?

- All NGOs have to register with NGO board and CONGOMA. FOL is a registered and recognized NGO with both CONGOMA and NGO board.
- Most people, especially students, do not know that an adult having sex with a minor (below 16), even if it is consensual, is a crime.
- Construction of the KCH OSC officially began in 2015 and by the end of 2016 it is still not finished.

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KAMUZU CENTRAL HOSPITAL (LILONGWE) ONE STOP CENTRE END OF 2016 CONSTRUCTION UPDATE

Over the past couple of years we have been giving you updates of the construction of the Kamuzu Central Hospital (Lilongwe) One Stop Centre. Research shows that Lilongwe is one of the districts in Malawi that has the highest defilement and rape cases. It is also the capital city of Malawi.

The KCH OSC should have been constructed and launched by early January 2016 but as of 22nd December 2016 the building is not yet finished. FOL visited the site to observe any sort of progress and all that remains is painting and other minor finishing touches to complete the building. There were no constructors on site and no one to provide information on when it is expected to be completed.

It is crucial that the OSC is completed as soon as possible for people to have access to the services the OSCs and FOL provides. Meanwhile FOL continues to provide counselling at the hospital and area 3 police victim support unit while waiting for OSC to be completed.



ABOVE: KCH One Stop Centre building nearly finished

SAFETY DURING THE HOLIDAYS

It is holiday season when we are all surrounded by family, relatives, friends and sometimes strangers. It is time to be festive but also time to be cautious. Anyone can be a victim and anyone can be a perpetrator. Do not leave children alone. Do not leave them with strangers or someone you do not trust. Do not go out alone or at least tell someone you trust of your whereabouts. Empower children to report any suspicious and inappropriate behavior and please BELIEVE THEM until proven otherwise. If sexually assaulted please go to the nearest HOSPITAL as soon as possible.

FOL will be officially closed from 23rd December 2016 to 2nd January 2017. FOL wishes you all a Merry and SAFE Christmas and a happy New Year!!!!!!

REPORT DEFILEMENT AND RAPE IMMEDIATELY



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