

# FOUNTAIN OF LIFE



6/30/2013

## Mid-Year Report

Fountain of Life (Malawi) has made great strides in 2013 thanks to support from Broadway Church in Vancouver, BC, Canada. The office is open, staff is hired, workshops run, open days held, support for volunteer counselors a reality, possible local partnership relationships under way.... God is good!

# Fountain of life

## MID-YEAR REPORT

### ONE STOP CENTRE OPEN

At the end of February of this year the President of Malawi – Joyce Banda – officially opened the first One Stop Centre in Malawi. This is based at the Queen Elizabeth Hospital in Blantyre and is to be a place where victims of all kinds of trauma can receive all the services they need in one place. This means the Doctors and Nurses are available there, the Police have an officer posted there, a Social Worker is placed there and counselors or comforters are available. It is the only operational One Stop Centre in the country and is a great start to improve support services for victims of sexual assault. The Government has plans to have several other similar OSC's operational but there are many challenges to make this a reality.



President opening the OSC



Poster with FOL Logo



FOL Team in the Counselling room

#### *A OSC Story.*

*A 13 year old girl was brought in soaked in blood, raped by three men. They took her to the examination room and the guardian came to me asking for K20 (a Canadian nickel) to buy airtime. I told her to come to the counselling room so she can make the phone call on my cellphone. We asked her who she wanted to call and she said home so someone can bring a change clothes for the girl. We said, "it's ok" and gave her a chitenje, underwear and t shirt. She looked at us and brokedown in tears. She kept on repeating 'for what u have done, God bless, i dont know what to say'. This reminded me again of why FOL is there - to let God touch lives in the midst of the trauma. For God to assure them that He is with them no matter how bad the situation. (Tandu - FOL Team leader)*

The reason this is included in this report is that the team of volunteer counselors/comforters are linked to FOL. The OSC now sees approximately 30 clients a month and 90% of these are less than 15 years of age. The team of FOL counselors is making an amazing difference in the lives of these children as they comfort them and their families after such horrific trauma has been visited upon them. An interesting point is that the team of 8 volunteers all come from one Church in Blantyre. This Church not only provides the volunteers for the OSC that bring hope and comfort to these children but it has also committed to support FOL on a monthly basis.

Road to Relief – a women's group in Blantyre – supported the printing of a color brochure for the OSC in English and Chichewa. They also are supporting them in other ways and are a great local partner.

We need more local support like these two groups.

## FOL OFFICE OPEN

Thanks to Broadway Church in Vancouver, FOL now has an office open in Lilongwe. It is in a great location near to the main mini-bus zone near to Shoprite. It has a nice sized space on the lower level for the Resource Centre which will – over time – collect various resources and tools to help those involved in supporting victims of sexual violence. The upper level is the office space. The office can and will be used for meetings with various stakeholders and to host open days on different topics and areas of interest related to improving networking and coordination of support services.



Lusungu & Salome in front of FOL Office

## INTRODUCTION TO TRAUMA COUNSELLING WORKSHOPS HELD



Brent Diaz in Lilongwe focusing on Trauma Counselling

It was great to have Brent Diaz come from Canada to deliver a couple workshops in Malawi. Brent is a Social Worker with a M.A. and he works in the Greater York region in Ontario. Most of his cases have to do with sexual assault and he came to provide an introduction to Trauma Counseling. FOL worked with him to organize a 2 Day Workshop in Lilongwe and a 3 Day Workshop in Blantyre. In Lilongwe we planned for 25 people and in the end we had 40 from 16 different Churches and ministries. Clearly there was great interest in this kind of training. The feedback was that it was far too short and that we needed to have many more such Workshops

organized. The demand for what FOL can offer is very high and we know the task is a huge one but with support from Churches like Broadway, other interested organisations and people like Brent, progress can be made. We need more passionate and committed people with expertise in this field to partner with us to run similar Training Events.

## FOL STAFF HIRED



Lusungu



Salome



Thengi

As of April 1<sup>st</sup>, again due to support from Broadway Church in Vancouver, FOL was able to hire 2 full time staff. One is the Coordinating, Networking & Advocacy Officer Lusungu Kalanga. The second is the cleaner and general hand –

Salome Uledi. Lusungu primarily runs the office and does all the logistical work for the various activities FOL is undertaking. For example, she organized the Workshops in Lilongwe and helped with Blantyre when Brent came. She also is building up our database of potential resource people as well as overseeing the Resource Centre. Salome takes care of the office and Lusungu and other Directors who drop by.

As of July 1<sup>st</sup>, a 3<sup>rd</sup> staff member was hired in Blantyre to help give stability to the OSC and to help the team of volunteers by supporting them in various ways. Her name is Thengi Chirwa and she will work under the leadership and oversight of Tandulnji Zimba who is now a Director of FOL.

## FIRST OPEN DAY HELD



Police explaining their Plans to the group.

It was great to partner with the Malawi Police Service at an Open Day at the FOL office site. The purpose of this day was so the Police could explain their role in assisting victims of all kinds of trauma – primarily at their Victim Support Units (VSUs) across the country. The Guest of Honor was the Director of Social Welfare, Mr. Willard Manjolo who welcomed the event and the networking opportunity it gave to his Ministry to link up with the Police. After the Police presented their strategies and plans, some tough questions were asked and they did a great job of

answering. It was clear that the Police had not been asked to partner with very many local organisations at all who were willing to work with them to improve their community image so their response to FOL was overwhelmingly positive. There is a great need to host additional such Open Days with a variety of Stakeholders and to continue to use these events to build a network that will improve support services for victims of sexual assault.

## FUTURE PLANS & HOPES & DREAMS

### Broadway Keeping On & Other Churches & Supporters to Join

2013 has seen FOL take some great steps forward. We are hoping that the journey continues. Broadway Church in Vancouver has said they have made FOL their main mission focus for a 1 year period and this has had amazing impact on what we are able to begin. We cannot express our thanks to Broadway enough and pray that they will be able to support FOL for the year and perhaps beyond. It would also be great for more Churches to get involved as well as other interested individuals and organisations.

### Charis Foundation Proposal

A proposal has been submitted to the Charis Foundation which is a Canadian Christian Foundation. The concept presented to them is to develop a Church “Tool Kit” to create a safe place for victims of sexual assault. This Tool Kit will include a number of resources and information and the goal is to disseminate this to many churches across Malawi. The prayer is that it will help Church Leaders understand their role in taking action to make their Churches a safe place – including the novel idea that they should not be the perpetrators! It will also have information on the Biblical mandate related to the issue and ideas and suggestions for how to engage the congregations in helping those traumatised by sexual violence. It will also have links and information related to connecting with Clinics, the Police, legal aid, and other resource persons and organisations. We are very excited about this possibility of support through the Charis Foundation and are praying they will catch the vision of the potential impact this could have on victims of sexual violence as well as the Church in general across the nation of Malawi.

### Proposal by Lusungu

Another proposal is being worked on by Lusungu to develop Awareness and Education resources for both rural and urban communities. These would cover 4 topics – What is Sexual Assault?, What is the Impact of Sexual Violence on the Individual, Family & Community, How to Help a Victim of Sexual assault, Sexual Violence & People With Disabilities. These would be produced in 4 languages – English, Chichewa, Tumbuku and Yao and utilizing a variety of ECD materials and methods. She is doing this as part of her responsibilities linked to being chosen as one of Africa’s young emerging women leaders. Let’s hope she is successful in finding funds to implement this great idea.

## Great Potential for New York Firm to Support FOL

A company in New York City that specializes in on-line social media, marketing and fund-raising has taken on FOL as their Charity of choice and is working on our behalf pro-bono. Currently they are redesigning our logo, re-doing the website and working with Lusungu on how to effectively utilize all social media elements such as Facebook, Twitter, YouTube and the many others that are out there. On the site will be “buckets” of funding that will allow on-line donations and this could have a tremendous result and support for FOL. Once we know the launch date for the whole plan, this information will be sent out. This company is so passionate and committed to what FOL is trying to achieve in Malawi and we are enormously grateful for their support, interest, expertise and willingness to donate so much of their time to us.



Another exciting potential that they have another client who brush is hugely popular in N. growing. The company that makes adopt and when the firm that is suggested FOL right away. It is such to water and girls and women and and women! Discussions are Company can support FOL through Brush in every Comfort pack given possibility is to donate a portion of knows what will come of this!



development linked to this company is makes and sells the “wet brush”. This America and Europe and sales are the wet brush is looking for a charity to doing work for FOL heard that they a great connection as wet brush is linked FOL is linked to water and mostly girls underway to explore how the Wet Brush its sales. One idea was to include a Wet to victims of sexual assault. Another the profit on each brush to FOL. Who

## Blantyre International University

Another exiting potential partnership is with a University in Blantyre that offers a 4 year B.A in Counseling & Psychology. We did not know this kind of course was possible or available in Malawi and this is great news. We will explore how we can work together and if we can get sponsorships for Malawians to take this course. We will also be able to help find placements for the practical that the students will have to do as part of the course. There are already some students placed at the One Stop Centre in Blantyre so this is a very positive indication that we can go far together. Think of us as we have further discussions with the University and Ministry of Education to develop a truly complementary and positive relationship.