



2014 ANNUAL REPORT

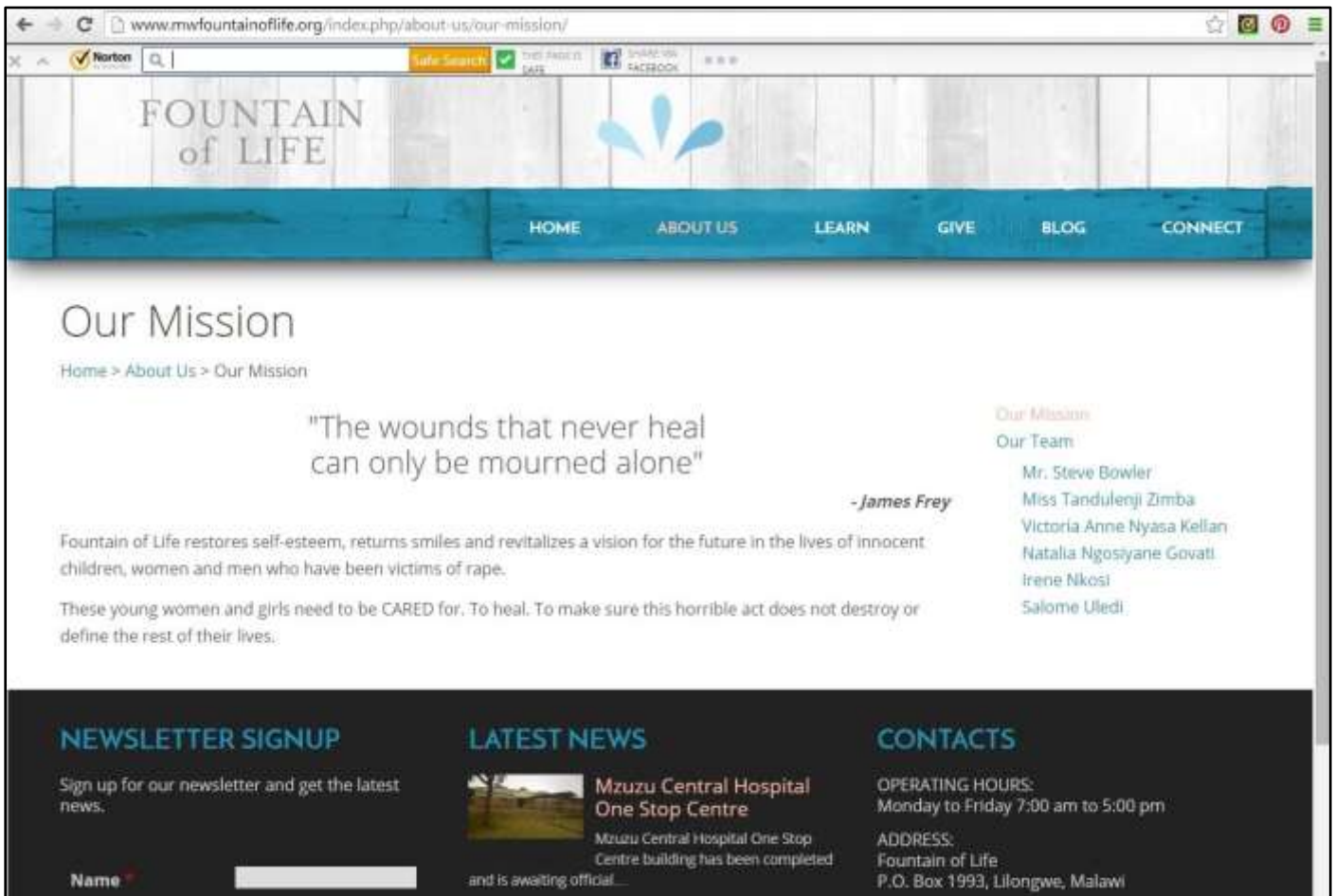
Prepared By:

Stephen J. Bowler

On Behalf of the Directors of Fountain of Life Ltd. (Malawi)

FOL & SOCIAL MEDIA

2014 saw FOL make great strides in expanding its presence in the various social media marketing areas. Our website was re-designed and launched thanks to the pro bono work of a wonderfully supportive firm in the States – Fishbat. You can visit the site at www.mwfountainoflife.org. On the site you can get caught up on what we are all about as well as explore various ways to donate funds to FOL through our three (3) “buckets of funding” Comfort, Education and Research.



FOL also has a Facebook page - www.facebook.com/fountainoflife.malawi, a Twitter account – the handle is @MalawiFol and a Youtube page – handle is Fountain of Life (Malawi) ltd. Please feel free to check all these out and we will be working hard to keep them current and interesting.

A ONE STOP CENTRE STORY.

It was wonderful to have a case referred to us from a health facility in the rural-urban periphery. This was one of the facilities that we visited during our awareness campaign. We encouraged the staff to refer cases to the One Stop Centre (OSC) for services children need like counseling.

The case that came to us involved a 12 year old girl who was being molested by her grandfather for the past six years – it started when she was 6! It was the grandmother who found her husband lying naked on top of their granddaughter. The grandmother had a very tough decision to make – choose to support her grand-daughter or stay with her husband who she was economically dependent on. In addition her sons also told her that if she reported the case to the police they would deal with her and the grand-daughter harshly. With great courage the grand-mother still went ahead and reported to the police. The police officer at the OSC was very helpful and the perpetrator is currently in police custody.

FOL IN BLANTYRE

FOL has a great presence in Blantyre in the southern part of the country due to one of our Directors – Tandu Zimba. She oversees what happens at the OSC at the hospital as well as being involved in other activities that her team undertakes. Tandu provided her own Annual Report on all that has been happening in Blantyre and elements of that report are included here.

Workshops & Awareness Campaigns

2014 has been another successful year accomplishing what was planned at the beginning of the year to complement the provision of counseling services to survivors of Gender Based Violence. With support from well-wishers, two workshops for Magistrates, Investigators, Victim Support Unit Officers and Prosecutors was organized and facilitated. In total, approximately 110 Magistrates and others attended. It was a good opportunity to present and discuss challenges that survivors of abuse and their families encounter in trying to pursue justice.



In addition to these workshops two (2) members of the counseling team are part of the training team for other One Stop Centers that are being set up across Malawi under the Ministry of Health. To date training has been done for teams that will work at the Zomba, Mulanje, Mzuzu, Lilongwe and Mchinji One Stop Centers.

The team of volunteer lay counselors in Blantyre also worked with Maggi's Girls home. They introduced development touch therapy to help girls when the home was opened in 2010 and last year teen sessions with the older girls took place because of the many challenges they were facing. An additional positive in this partnership is that our counselor worked hand in hand with Nancy, an expert social worker, to gain skills that can be used in working with teenage girls referred to the OSC where the team works.

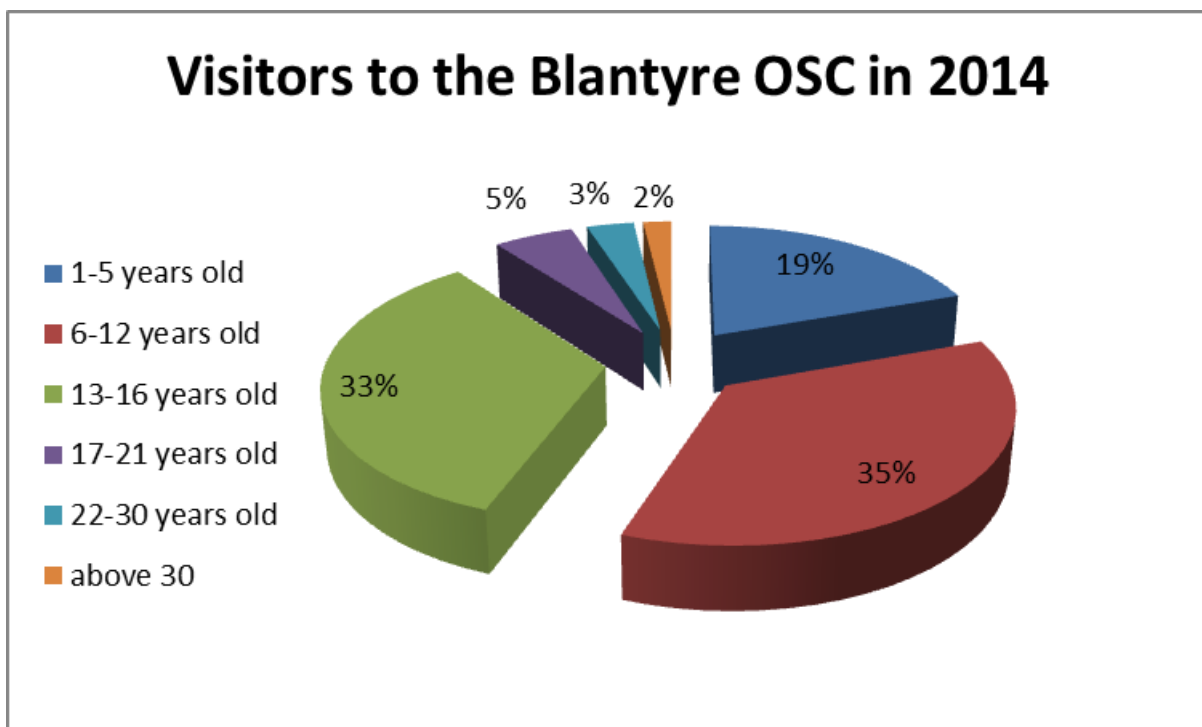
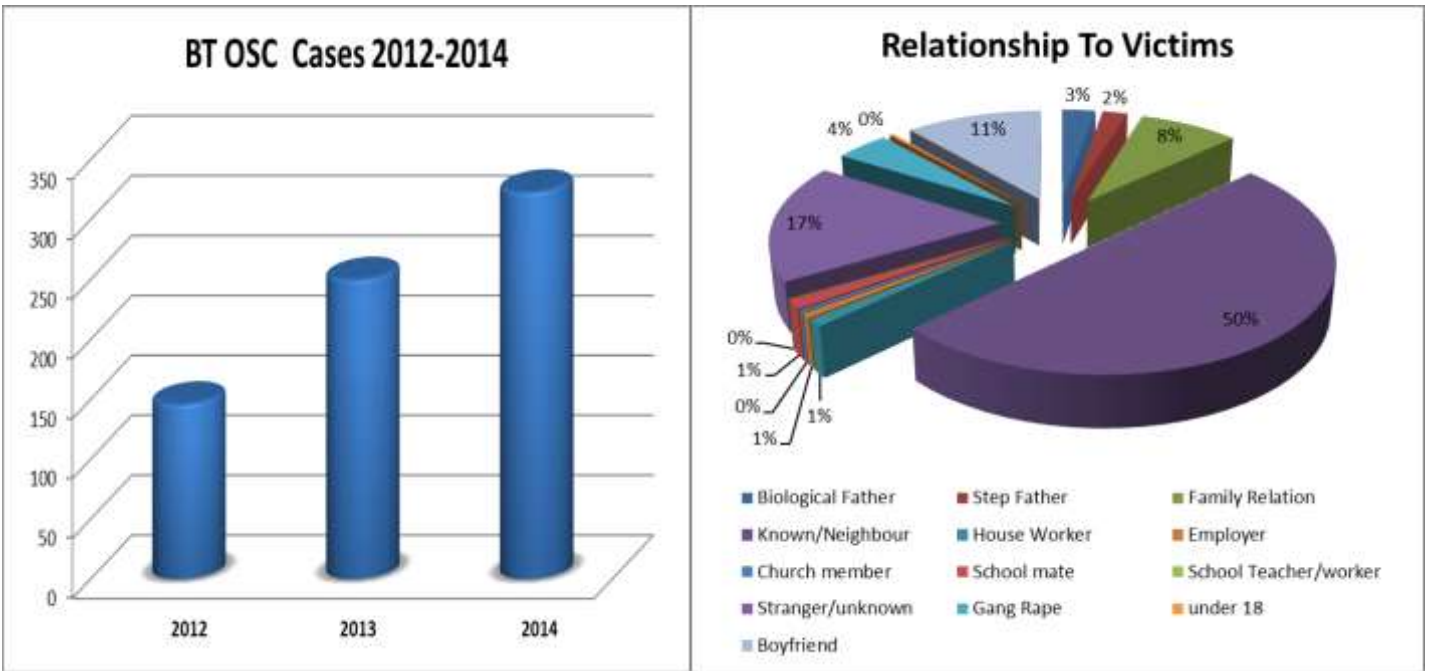
Towards the end of 2014 a new opportunity to speak at a Montessori Training session for teachers opened up. The teachers work with a very vulnerable age group play a critical role "Breaking the Silence" around sexual abuse and their responsibility to report any suspicion of abuse so the children can seek help and support.

Finally, the team in Blantyre worked with a local Church in their Street Children's Ministry. They showed an awareness video on sexual assault to the girls that live on the streets in Blantyre. Some brought their guardians/parents with them. An organization that works to empower young girls in Chilomoni also had their girls attend together with parents and guardians. The Blantyre team will be following up these initiatives in 2015.

The Blantyre One Stop Centre (OSC)

There is a wonderful team of volunteer lay counsellors that work out of the Blantyre OSC at the Queen Elizabeth Hospital. FOL does employ a full time person to coordinate their work and volunteer time and to collect the information that appears below. A huge vote of thanks goes to these six (6) passionate and committed ladies who are positively impacting the lives of so many children and women who seek help.

There are now three (3) years of information relating to visit to the OSC. In the charts below this trend can be seen as well as some specifics for 2014. You can see that girls 16 years old and less make up almost 90% of those who seek help. It is also staggering to realise that 83% of perpetrators are known to the victim – they are not strangers but someone who should be trusted. There is much to do to raise awareness about this issue!



A ONE STOP CENTRE STORY.

Towards the end of 2014 a case of three girls being molested by a man in the neighborhood came to us. The girls attended play sessions and the parents attended parents sessions. There were a great many challenges in the community and with the police but the sessions continued. The sessions empowered the parents not to give up and allowed them to talk about the issues. The case was also referred to the Juvenile Justice Chairman as it was one of the cases the police were not helping with. We recently received good news that the perpetrator was sentenced to 20 years in prison. This shows how successful cases can be if victims and family receive support and are willing to take part in the whole process of healing and seeking justice.

FOL OFFICE IN LILONGWE

The office in Lilongwe serves as the base for all the activities undertaken by FOL. There have even been some cases coming to our offices seeking counseling. At the moment we have seven (7) volunteer lay counselors who are available to work with FOL and any victims of sexual violence that come forward. The challenge is to keep them committed to this in the absence of the OSC in Lilongwe. One of the ways that this is being done is to provide on-going training for them through an Australian volunteer social worker that has been in the Malawi for the past year.



The volunteer lay counsellors in the FOL office in Lilongwe

INVOLVEMENT IN ONE STOP CENTRES (OSC)



On the left – the OSC Task Force for Lilongwe Hospital. On the right the completed OSC at the Mzuzu Hospital in the north. Progress is being made and soon there will be more support services for victims of sexual violence.

Progress is being made in the country with the Government strategy to have OSC's attached to the major hospitals across Malawi. We are very excited that in Lilongwe a Task Force has been established for the planned OSC at Kamuzu Central Hospital. FOL has two members on that Task Force which is wonderful progress. It is expected that very soon the construction of the KCH OSC will begin and then our counsellors will have more to do.

In Mzuzu the OSC is built but not too much is happening. There is a team and we are exploring with the Mzuzu Hospital as well as St. John of God ways to ensure trauma counselling is available at this OSC. St. John of God is another health facility that works in Mzuzu and could be a great source of counsellors. They even offer some courses in trauma counseling and FOL is exploring with them how to access that training and we are looking for support to send our volunteer counsellors to take advantage of this opportunity.

To date a fair number of OSC teams have been trained through the support of the Malawi Government and UNICEF and UNFPA. Our FOL team in Blantyre has been a part of the team delivering the training. A potential

and exciting opportunity has opened up with UNICEF who have asked FOL to develop a model for trauma counselling based on how well the FOL counsellors are working at the Blantyre OSC. This is something we will be working hard on in the coming year. The graphic below is an attempt to capture what is needed to ensure effective trauma counselling is available.



FOL STAFF UPDATE



Salome



Irene



Natalia

FOL has three (3) full time staff employed in 2014. Salome and Natalia are based at the FOL Office in Lilongwe. Irene is the FOL Coordinator at the Blantyre OSC. FOL is very fortunate to have these committed and passionate ladies working for FOL and for those who have been so deeply traumatized by sexual assault.

ADDITIONAL HIGHLIGHTS IN 2014

Comfort Pack Campaign

In 2014 we decided to try and use a crowd funding strategy through a website to raise support for what we do in Malawi. The focus of the campaign was the provision of “Comfort Packs” that would be given to victims of sexual violence when they had the courage to come forward and seek help. The campaign did not go as well as hoped but some funds did come in which are being used to have huge impact on those who seek help. This campaign is on-going and funds can be given at any time to support this initiative. A story is given below that highlights this.

Segal Family Foundation

A very unexpected but welcome surprise in 2014 was a positive response from a new donor – the Segal Family Foundation. They have agreed to support FOL for at least one year and if all goes well we very much hope that this funding will continue beyond 2015.

THE DIFFERENCE A SMALL ACT OF KINDNESS MAKES.

A father came to the OSC with his 5 year old daughter who was defiled by her uncle. The father has 4 children with 3 different women and when the relationship ended with the mother of the 5 year old girl four years ago, the mother dropped the child off at a relative of the father in the home village. The father was asked to get the girl last year; but the father was living with another woman who he left just 2 months ago. When he did finally collect his daughter she regressed in her behavior and cried most of the time. She rarely speaks, often soils her underwear and shows many other signs of trauma.

When the father and daughter came to the hospital the girl did not say she wanted to go to the toilet and ended up soiling her underwear. We could hear the worried tone in the father's voice as he clearly did not know how to deal with this situation. We handed the father a bar of soap, toilet paper, clothes for changing and directed them to a shower where he cleaned his daughter. He came back with her looking so relieved. A year ago this father would have had no choices but try to find some paper to clean his child and still wait with his child to be treated with smelly clothes. We have learned that it is always the simple things like these that remind us what a difference our services make in peoples lives. We bring comfort and healing through very simple acts of kindness..

Partnership with Children of Blessing Trust

Fountain of Life worked with Children of Blessing Trust (COBT), a local NGO that works with children with disabilities and their families based in area 25. COBT received funding to run some workshops in communities around the issue of sexual assault and violence against people with disabilities. Statistic suggest that someone with a disability is 5 times more likely to be sexually assaulted so it is critical to deal with this issue in this population. FOL was asked to give a presentation on the counseling services they provide for victims, survivors and guardians. Apart from FOL, COBT involved a nurse from the One Stop Centre team from Kamuzu Central Hospital, a police officer from a Victim Support Unit and a social worker from the Social Welfare Office to provide a complete package of how rape victims are helped by each one of the service providers.

The awareness campaign was carried out in eight rural communities around Lilongwe where COBT works. It took a day for each community, eight days for the whole awareness workshop from October to Early November. They were a great success and parents/guardians were asking that this be done in many more communities.

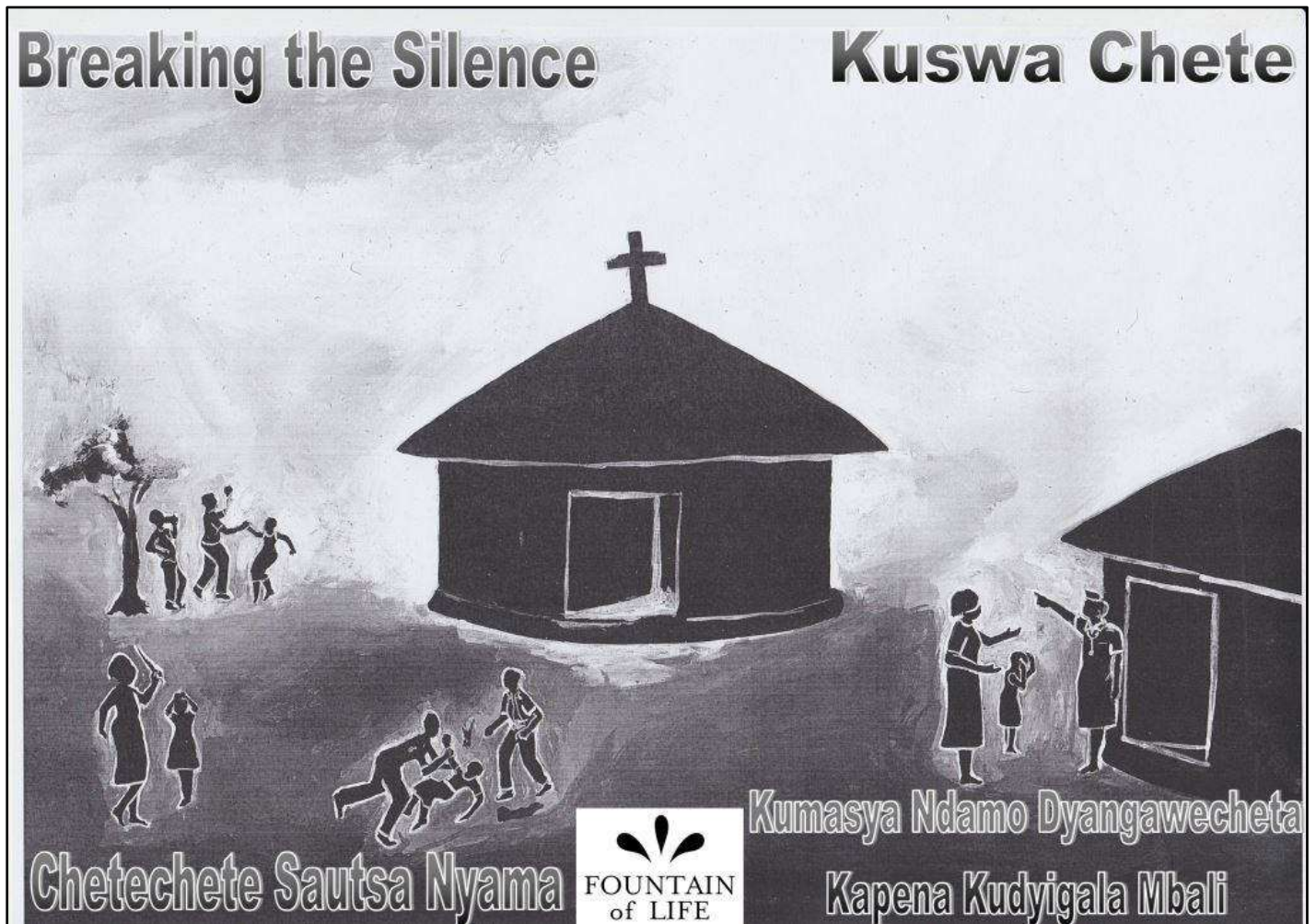


The Awareness Campaign with Children of Blessing Trust. The team was able to use the stories from the Resource Package developed for Churches – explained below. Telling stories through pictures was a great non-confrontational way to stimulate a lot of discussion.

The Church Tool Kit – BREAKING THE SILENCE!

The proposal to the Charis Foundation was approved and work began to explore how to create the most effective tool kit that churches can use to create a safe place for victims of sexual violence. The priority at the Task Force meeting was determined to be the need to BREAK THE SILENCE on this issue in churches and communities. There are many different tool kits out there and many are rather large manuals which often sit unused on shelves. The Task Force did not want this to happen. It was decided that a tool or resources that engaged people in an active way would be more effective. The result is that the resource developed has eight (8) stories told through a series of pictures done by a local Malawian artist. The resource was done in the four (4) main languages of Malawi – English, Chichewa, Tumbuka and Yao. It has already been used in one awareness campaign as described above as two of the stories are about children with disabilities. There is also one story of a man that was assaulted and the others describe different actual attacks. Everyone can look at the pictures and relate to what they portray and the facilitators draw out some really useful discussions.

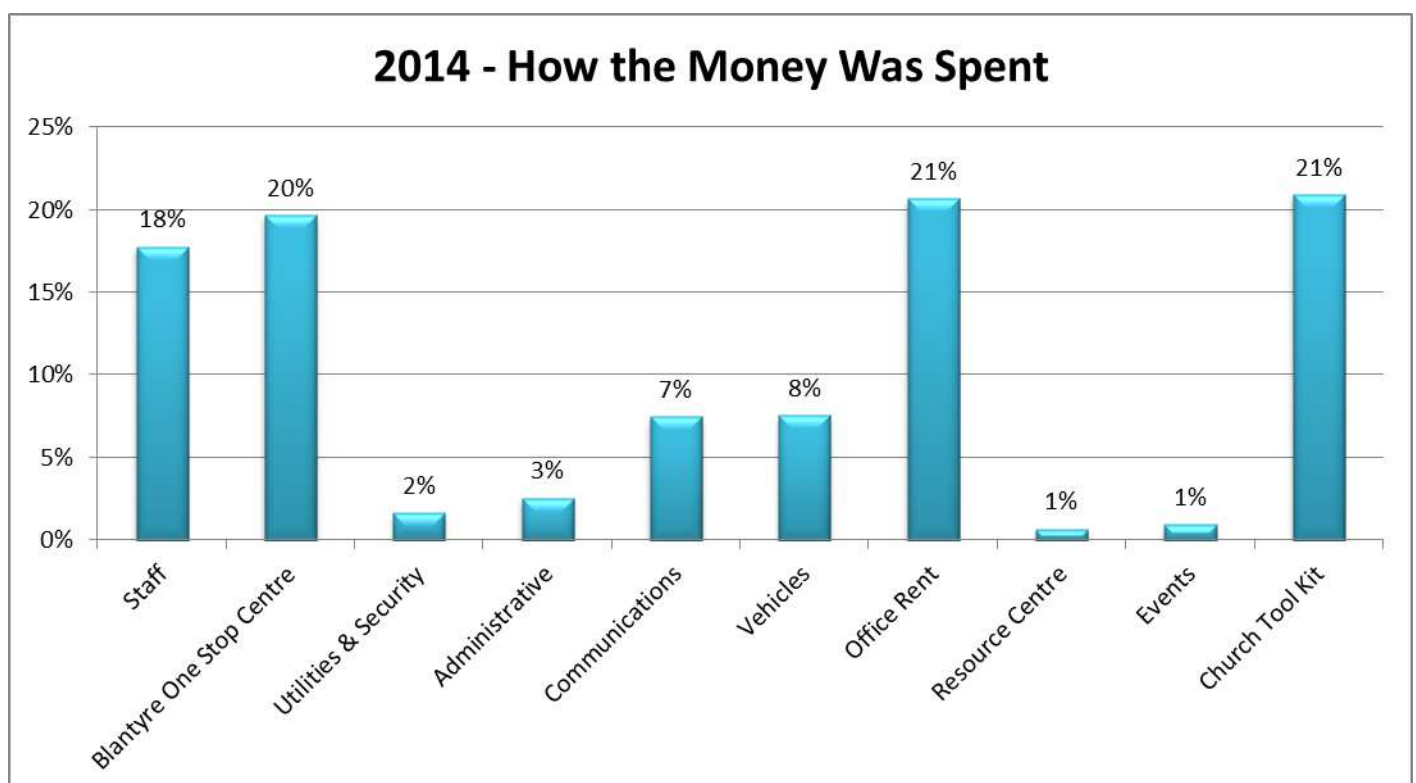
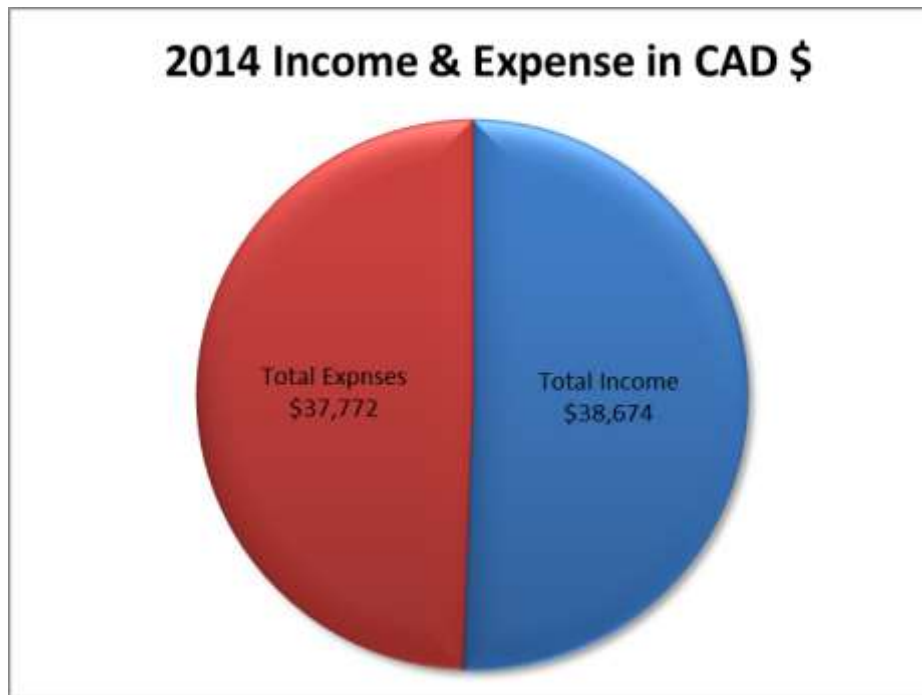
In 2015 this resource will be disseminated through Churches and umbrella Church bodies. In addition, we shower an early draft to UNICEF and they are very interested in adapting it to use in all faith based organisations so we will be exploring how that can be done.



2014 FINANCIAL REPORT

The bulk of our financial support in 2014 still came from the same source as I 2013 – Broadway Church in Vancouver, BC, Canada. However, there were a couple new supporters and this helped us to make it through the year. We continue to be extremely grateful to our donors as without them FOL would not exist.

The funds from Broadway covered much of the general overhead and allowed us to keep the FOL office open in Lilongwe and to continue supporting the Blantyre team. The Charis Foundation provided funds to produce the Church Took Kit as well as for some overhead. The Segal Family Foundation began their support for FOL in the last quarter of 2014. We also received some local support which is amazing.



FUTURE PLANS & HOPES & DREAMS

Work With UNICEF to Develop a OSC Model That Can Be Replicated

Our involvement with OSC's as the main provider of trauma counseling services will be a significant focus in 2015. We will continue to build on the experience and knowledge of our team working out of the Blantyre OSC and make this the primary model of how to deliver effective trauma counseling in partnership with many other Government agencies. Our involvement on the Task Force of the Lilongwe KCH OSC will continue and grow as this OSC becomes operational. As we work on the model for delivery of trauma counseling linked to the OSC's with UNICEF, this will be tested in some of the other OSC's around Malawi including Mzuzu.

Charis Foundation Proposal

Plans are under way to prepare a new proposal to submit to the Charis Foundation for disseminating the great Tool Kit produced in 2014. It is very important that training of facilitators take place so the resource can be used as effectively as possible.

Segal Family Foundation

Throughout 2015 we will be solidifying our relationship with the Segal Family Foundation with the expectation that we will work on a proposal to secure additional funding from them into 2016 and beyond.

Securing Additional Funds to Enable FOL to Continue Operations.

2015 may well be a turning point in terms of our sustainability to operate over time. There is an urgent need to secure stable funding to take us through the next years and the team of Directors will be working on and sending out proposals to whoever can be identified that may be willing to support this extremely valuable work we are engaged in. Keep in touch to see how we are doing...

Continued Focus on Education & Awareness

We continue to see the need to break the silence on the reality of rape, its impact on the victim and the on-going consequences in a person's life. The more we talk about these issues and the more we are able to offer concrete help and support for someone so traumatized, the better for individuals, families and communities.

Building a Pool of Trained Trauma Counsellors

FOL continues to place a priority on finding ways to enhance the skills of our volunteer lay counsellors. Efforts will be made to secure funding that will allow our counsellors to take the training course at St. John of God but also to access other kinds of training. Qualified Psychologists, family therapists, Social Workers and so on from outside Malawi are always welcome to work with our team and build their skills.

MUTUAL SUPPORT GOES A LONG WAY.

Teen support group sessions have been introduced in Blantyre with amazing success with both the girls who come and their parents/families. The girls enjoyed learning from each other, make contributions to the discussion, happy to be accepted and to share their thoughts in a safe place. One of the girls when she was brought on the first day for treatment she was emotional and cried throughout the session. On the last day of their time together the girls were given an exercise to rate themselves on scale of 1-10 (10 being feeling at their best and equipped to cope and 1 being the other extreme). This girl said she came at 1 on the scale and felt to be at 10 after

the group sessions. All the girls agreed that they had moved from a 1 to a much larger number on the scale. It was pointed out to the girls that this is not a straight graph and that they should not lose heart if sometimes they feel like they go down the scale but to use the skills they have learned from each other and from the sessions to keep moving forward.

Another girl shared on the first day of the group session how hard it was for her to go outside the house and the pain of hearing what the people in the neighborhood were saying as if it was her fault. The other girls shared with her what it is that helps them to move on despite what others say. By the end of the session the girl shared that she was able to go out.

These kinds of sessions should be what FOL should aim at, walking with the survivors from their lowest point to a point where they are ready to face their fears and to believe in themselves