

18th December, 2014

ANNUAL REPORT FROM THE COMMUNICATION AND PUBLIC RELATIONS OFFICER

AREAS OF FOCUS

1. SETTING UP SOCIAL NETWORKS

FACEBOOK: The previous Fountain of Life Facebook page was deleted due to technical difficulties. It was created by a personal account that belonged to a previous employee so to access it we needed the personal password. A new page was created with a new user and account that is general and can be used by authorized users. The page has 133 Likes so far. Steve Bowler and Natalia Govati are the managers of the page.

Email address: fountainoflifemalawi@gmail.com

Facebook Page: <https://www.facebook.com/fountainoflife.malawi>

TWITTER: FOL has a Twitter account which is linked to the Facebook page. Everything posted on the Facebook page goes directly to the Twitter page. It has 30 followers so far.

Email address: info@mwfountainoflife.org

Twitter handle: @MalawiFoL

YOUTUBE:

Email address: info@mwfountainoflife.org

YouTube Handle: Fountain of Life (Malawi) ltd

WEBSITE:

Link: <http://www.mwfountainoflife.org>

2. KAMUZU CENTRAL HOSPITAL ONE STOP CENTRE



The training for the ONE STOP CENTRE (OSC) teams from Lilongwe and Mchinji took place in Lilongwe from the 29th to 31st July, 2014. The teams comprised of personnel that are supposed to be operating in all One Stop Centers, that is, Medical (nurses, clinicians, doctors) Legal (police, prosecutors, magistrates) and Social Welfare (social workers, counselors). The main aim of the training was to orient each other on OSC guidelines.

There was a good representation from both districts and the training was insightful. One of FOL's volunteer counselors and I were privileged to be part of the training. We got to experience and learn from everyone how OSC operates since we were all sharing day to day experiences. We got to meet some of FOL counselors from the OSC in Blantyre (QECH) who presented a case study from their centre.

We got to learn that at least Mchinji has an operating structure, as in, certain rooms were renovated for the One Stop Centre and they already have a team. It was clearly noted that Lilongwe is way behind and that there is no fully functioning team operating together. Most of the personnel from Lilongwe did not even know that there is a "OSC" at Kamuzu Central Hospital but the rest of the participants thought Lilongwe has an operational OSC even without a set structure. There was no evidence of team work from Lilongwe but we got to know each other and share ideas.

On the last day of the training it was suggested that Mchinji and Lilongwe teams meet and discuss the way forward on how they will operate before the training finished. It was a very good suggestion because we strategized how KCH OSC should and will be operating from now onwards even without a proper structure. The team agreed to be meeting every last Wednesday of the month, exchanged contacts and set up the next meeting.

It was such a wonderful and milestone event for FOL Lilongwe because we have been trying since early this year to find an entry point to KCH, get a room and start providing counseling services to victims of rape and sexual assault. After the training, the Lilongwe team was assured that a room will be found within the month and it will start following the guidelines that were shared during the workshop. It was a very insightful and helpful. We have found connections and contact people from all the necessary partners for the OSC. We hope that finally KCH will now have a functioning team to work at the OSC

even though there is no “building” but at least it is a step forward, when the building is finally available it will be an easy transition because the team is already set.

Kamuzu Central Hospital (KCH) has a One Stop Center team now that is fully functional even though there is no structure. The team meets every last Wednesday of the month. The chairperson is a medical doctor Yamikani M’angisa-Mgusha and it comprises of medical doctors, Nurses, Police officers from the Victim Support Unit and from the hospital, a Prosecutor from the police, Social Welfare officer and members from Fountain of Life.

All members of staff at the hospital will be oriented on all protocols to follow when they receive victims of rape and sexual assault and where to direct them since the team is now functioning. This is great progress as Fountain of Life counselors now have a room to start counseling rape victims as part of the OSC team in Lilongwe.



3. ON-GOING TRAINING FOR VOLUNTEER COUNSELORS

Chikondi Walapa, a volunteer counselor who was based in Blantyre and was a volunteering at the Blantyre One Stop Centre moved to Lilongwe and was interested to continue volunteering in Lilongwe as well. Since there is no OSC “building” yet it has proven to be a challenge to start counseling services at KCH although we have been informed that a room is available. Without a working space for the counselors it is difficult for the volunteers to commit because there is no work space and also no work although there are more victims each and every day.

FOL however has seven (7) volunteer counselors who get on-going training from various experienced counselors like an Australian Social Worker (Zoe) who was in Malawi for a year and she volunteered to share her skills with the counselors twice a month. This keeps the counselors refreshed and occupied

before the actual space is acquired at KCH. Without the room most of the volunteers lose interest but at least with the on-going training they still have hope. There is need however to have a more permanent trainer because the volunteers are lay counselor and are in need of regular and relevant skills to help them provide the appropriate service to the victims. By having regular training FOL can have more and more volunteers because they will be gaining useful skills.



As of now, the counselors we have in Lilongwe are:

Chikondi Walapa	chikondiwalapa@yahoo.com	0999 940 420
Kumbukani Barbara Kajumie	kkajumie@yahoo.com	0991 786 526
Elinas Manda	elinasmanda@gmail.com	0991 070 527
Pushpa Jamieson	pushpaane@hotmail.com	0999 942 740
Dickson Mchiliko	dmchiliko@yahoo.com	0999 879 955
Chikondi Chadza	chadzachikondi@gmail.com	0999 095 601

4. RAISING AWARENESS IN COMMUNITIES

Fountain of Life worked with Children of Blessing Trust (COBT), an NGO that helps children with disabilities based in area 25. We partnered with COBT to raise awareness on rape and sexual assault. FOL was approached 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 was carried out in eight rural communities in Lilongwe where COBT works. It took a day for each community, eight days for the whole awareness workshop from October to Early November.



We used two stories from the church tool kit to start the discussions about rape and how victims can get help from different service providers. During the discussions the community came up with their own responses like “victims need to go to the police or hospital and receive further help in form of counseling.” They could also relate with what was going on in the stories and they admitted that it does happen in their communities. After the discussions, the nurse from KCH OSC team explained where and how victims are helped at the hospital and signs to look out for to see someone has been raped. The officer from the Victim Support Unit also gave a presentation on how the victims are helped at the police, how the whole process is carried out for a perpetrator to be finally convicted. FOL counselors also gave a presentation on the services it provides, the benefits of counseling, the effects of trauma on victims who do not get counseling and how to prevent rape however they can.

All of the communities knew about most of the information but they did not know how they can get the help practically. They opened up about rape in their communities and the team learnt a lot from the

communities especially how people think about rape. In all of the communities we were asked to try and continue with the awareness to other communities meaning they saw it as a good thing.

5. MZUZU OSC

Mzuzu OSC building has been completed and is awaiting the official launch but it is functioning. It is a separate building from the main hospital building and easy to get to and it is seen from the entrance gate. As of now there is no Police officer on site but they are contacted when needed. The hospital attendant did say that counseling can be done at the hospital as well but the clinical counselors, one of them is Victor Mbuzi who wasn't at the OSC but is also called when needed. There is an office for a social worker but ever since the OSC has started operating, a social worker has never come.



Besides the clinician's room, the OSC has a resting room for victims, nurse's room where all the examinations are done, it has a shower and toilet. There is a kitchen, a room for the police and a room for the social worker. The social worker's and Police's room are joined with a two way mirror where the conversation can be heard and seen from either rooms where talking to a client.

So far, clients range from 3 years old and it mostly teenagers who come in to report rape. It is rare for women to come to the OSC, only a few have managed to come. There has never been a case reported of a male victim yet.

The hospital is handling the administrative costs, some donations come in from others organizations but they are struggling for funds. There is no furniture in most of the rooms because there is no clear indication of "who" will cover the costs of the OSC. They open from 7:30am – 5:00pm.

6. ST JOHN OF GOD

St John of God, which is a college of Health Sciences in Mzuzu is the organization providing counseling at Mzuzu OSC. I met with Ndumanene Devlin Silungwe, a clinical psychologist at St John of God college. He is a child protection officer for SJOG, a lecturer in the counseling and psychology department and a member of the multidisciplinary team for Mzuzu OSC. He explained that SJOG provides counseling for trauma and post traumatic stress disorder among other things. They were involved with counseling long before the OSC was built at the hospital since they are the only organization in Mzuzu that provides counseling. They were at an advantage because they are in the middle of the central hospital and the police so clients/patients/victims were referred by either the hospital or by the police depending on the case. But the challenge was and is that even though they are in the middle of the hospital and police, most clients give up once they have received help from the police and hospital but some clients go for counseling. Another challenge is that the referral system was affected by the rotation system at the hospital. Some new members of staff did not know that clients can be referred to SJOG for counseling. Majority of the cases that they receive are women and they observed that every case that comes, whether its trauma, stress or depression, sexual abuse is always the reason behind it or part of it.



They have a trained a pool of counselors who will be part of the OSC when it is launched. There is a trauma counseling module in the psychology course so they are able train people to be counselors. They also work as consultants and are able to train other counselors or interested parties to be trained on specific modules. They have their own HTC and ART clinic and Devlin explained that SJOG could operate as a “OSC” on its own since they have medical personal who can help victims medically, carry out tests, provide medication and counseling. The only service they lack is the Police.

Ndumanene expressed that St John of God is aware of Fountain of Life and they are willing to work together with FOL however way possible. If Fountain of Life wants to train its own pool of counselors, St John of God would be the ideal institution to consult and possibly train the counselors according to Malawi context and it is convenient. It would take approximately two weeks full time to cover the Trauma Counseling and other basics module.

7. FOL DIRECTORY AND ASSETS TABLE

Please find attached documents in PDF format attached with this email.

8. FOL NEWSLETTERS

FOL Published Five Newsletters this year (2014) and they have been attached to the email.

9. PLANS FOR 2015

Since FOL is in the KCH OSC task force, there are plans to start counseling services at KCH in one of the rooms that has already been identified. Hopefully by mid January FOL will start providing the counseling. The OSC building has not been built yet but there are protocols being set to have the OSC team in one building or ward while we wait.

Training of counselors: St John of God already has the resources and capacity to train counselors. If FOL can source funds, we can get send some of our committed lay counselors for training.

Awareness: FOL needs to have an awareness campaign around Lilongwe. This will trigger clients and possibly force the parties involved to build the OSC because clients/victims will be going to KCH. Many people do not know that they can get helped in a lot of ways when raped and the awareness can help. It could also act as a marketing strategy for FOL because it will be seen by a lot of people and get recognition and hopefully get more donors.

Visit more of the OSC that UNICEF and UNFPA have built or renovated like Zomba, Mulanje, to learn from them and possibly share ideas.

It has been an amazing year with a lot of lessons learnt. We have made some progress and have met some setbacks but we hope next year will be another amazing year. FOL is changing lives. Sexual violence is being reported more and more and government is receiving pressure to do something about it. The gap that is there is the psychosocial support that FOL is trying to fill and will hopefully fill.

We thank all of our donors who have made our plans come to life especially the website and to all who have supported us whether financially or in any other way. Our team of volunteer counselors who still show up for trainings and meetings even when there is no room at the KCH.

Thank you to our Directors who work endlessly to keep FOL afloat. We know it hasn't been easy but you never give up. 2014 has been wonderful and a whirlwind of lessons. We hope 2015 has more.

Thank you.

Submitted by:



Natalia Govati, Communications and Public Relations Officer