

Lions Quest Report for Lions Regional Conference September 2012

Fellow Lions,

I am unable to attend the conference due to a personal reason. My apologies.

Lions Quest Malawi has conducted three workshops in Blantyre in April and May 2012. Dr Revati Balu Senior Trainer Coach facilitated all workshops.

120 teachers and 2 trainers of trainers were trained. The participants were from the following schools and organisations:

1. Central High School
2. Namiwawa Private School
3. Kalibu Academy
4. Nyasa Junior Academy
5. Saint Andrews High School
6. Joyce Banda Foundation
7. Mount View Primary School
8. Southend Secondary School
9. Chimwemwe Children's Centre
10. Step Kids Awareness (STEKA) Org
11. Southend Primary School
12. Bakhita Primary School
13. Madrasah Noorul Islam
14. Baitul Quraan Primary School
15. Malawi Montessori Primary School
16. St Patricks Primary School
17. Blantyre Baptist Primary
18. Salima Secondary School
19. Chimwemwe Children's Centre
20. Path Finder
21. St Patricks Academy
22. Bakhita Primary School

Out of the trained, four are lions and one is a housewife (wife of Lion Samir Patel of Blantyre Lions Club). The Two trainers of trainers are Lion Dr Venunadhan B. Pillai of Blantyre Lions Club and Mrs Audrey Mudzengere of Joyce Banda Foundation. (Malawi LQ initiative is featured in the August issue of the Lion Magazine Page 46.)

All these institutions mentioned above have started implementing the programme in their institutions. In addition to that, the programme is implemented at two churches in Blantyre. All these schools have been supplied with enough resources.

Life Skills is a subject taught in Malawi schools. I have made some initiatives to make the government accept Lions Quest as the official programme. I wrote a letter to the Minister of Education to that effect and personally met the Education Minister of that time. There was regime change immediately after this, nevertheless we received a positive reply from Ministry of Education. **(please see the attachment.)** The letter was forwarded to Mr Matthew Keifer and Ms Kelly Young of LQ headquarters. Unfortunately Kelly resigned from the organisation and Matt alone could not handle everything as such there has been a delay in replying to Ministry. There is a new coordinator in Kelly's place now called **Michael Di Maria**. Things are taking shapes again.

In between Matt sent a very encouraging mail to me which is really positive. The mail is copied below.

Dear Lion Venu,

First of all, let me apologize for the delay in my response. I am just now catching up with work after my return from the LCI International Convention in Korea. With Kelly no longer on staff at LCIF, things have fallen behind. I deeply apologize.

I am happy to draft a response from LCIF. I need to know a few things first, that will help me with the letter. First, I know that there has been a change in government. Do you still maintain positive contacts with the current government? Has the personnel at the Ministry of Education stayed the same?

Also, I am wondering if there is any interest on the part of the Ministry of Education in signing an official Memorandum of Agreement between them and LCIF, with the potential for co-financing. I have proposed to our new LCIF Chairperson, Dr. Wing-Kun Tam, that he visit Malawi to potentially sign such a document and hold meetings with high-level officials. This is just a proposal, and has not as of yet been accepted. However, I wanted to make you aware of the possibility.

Best regards,

Matt

I have discussed this with Lion Clement Ndala and the new LQ International Coordinator. LQ may be a major agenda during International president's visit to Malawi in February.

When we launch the programme again we have to target the government schools. We have a great opportunity to partner with the Government now. We have to work now to achieve this partnership before we have more training sessions.

I have had an opportunity to discuss this matter with our DG Lion Clement Ndala. My suggestion to him was to form a Malawi Lions Education Foundation which can oversee Lions Quest Programme in Malawi. This foundation can also venture in reading programme. We built some schools and donated to the government in the past and conditions of those schools are very bad now. The foundation can undertake measures to maintain Lions standards in those schools in partnering with LCIF, lions districts and clubs globally and other agencies. The Foundation also can undertake initiatives in Special Needs Education by starting special needs schools in Malawi. The clubs in Malawi organise education grants to secondary school students. The Foundation can assist the clubs in this activity as well. He was in favour of the idea. I hope we will be able to do this during this lionistic year.

I also take this opportunity to mention about RAP. (Reading activity)

I have not started anything at regional level due to some personal constraints. I will soon formulate an action plan. However, Southend School Leo club under Blantyre Lions Club has already undertaken the programme. They have been collecting some books. They will soon donate these books to Nyambadwe Lions School where there is no library at all. They also have planned to read with some children.

Kindest regards all.

-- Lion Dr Venunadhan B. Pillai