

BOU BULLETIN

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Prof. Frank Youngman, Mr Tommie Hamaluba, Ms Pirjo Samaraki and Ms Masego Bagopi

CARING FOR THE ENVIRONMENT

An Envoy from Environmental Online (ENO) Finland Ms Pirjo Samaraki paid a courtesy call to the Deputy Vice Chancellor, Academic Services Professor Frank Youngman accompanied by BOU Director Open Schooling Mrs Masego Bagopi and Subject Specialist Mr Tommie Hamaluba on 4th February 2020.

This follows a donation to Botswana Forest and Range Resources Department in the Ministry of Environment Tourism and Natural Resources of [28,000 Euros (BWP335,587.58)] which Mr Hamaluba solicited for tree planting of 40,000 trees in Botswana for 2020-2021 rainy seasons.

This came out of the subject specialist's long time community service on environmental issues in Botswana hence the donation called "Climate AID". A pre-launch campaign was done in Ghanzi district on 30th January 2019 spearheaded by the department of Forestry and Ranger Resources.

Tree Planting Donation to Schools in Botswana and Namibia

There will be a national climate change campaign in Finland called Climate Aid where Finnish people and companies donate money for concrete action against the climate change. One of the targets is tree planting abroad and the organisers have decided that ENO would be responsible for this gesture.

The aim is that with this support, schools in Botswana and Namibia would each plant 25 hectares of trees (about 50 000 trees in each country). Each tree planted will be given 0,7 euro to cover buying and costs.



BOU Staff with Ms Pirjo Samaraki

HR HOST SHE AWARENESS

The University recently launched the Safety Health Environment (SHE) committee at HQ to coordinate all the occupational health and safety issues. The first meeting of the committee recommended that there should be training or awareness for members to appreciate what is it that needs to be done. The HR therefore saw it necessary to conduct awareness workshop for committee members and regional representatives for the effectiveness of the committee at HQ and regions. Among the presenters were facility Managers from HQ, Gaborone, Francistown and Maun regional campuses.

The Facilities Manager for HQ Mr Disho defined the SHE, policy frameworks and best practices citing that there is a lot that needs to be done since the University in most regions is using buildings that were not originally designated for this institution like asbestos in Gaborone Regional Campus which poses a very high risk to employees. He said all staff members need to be made aware of the SHE issues so that risks are easily identified and avoided.

Presenting on the common causes of accidents Facilities Manager for Maun Mr Marumo informed the attendants that, offices and furniture contributes a lot to the workplace accidents. He said that an assessment need to be conducted where proper furniture can be installed and that congestion in offices need to be avoided. Attendants also raised a concern that they are not comfortable with a situation where there are no meeting rooms saying that this poses a higher risk of being attacked by clients.

Personal Protective Equipment (PPEs) also made an integral part of the awareness presented by the Facilities Manager for Francistown Regional Campus Mr Leggaba. The facilities manager alluded to the fact that the institution should consider issues of health from a broader perspective to include work related stress, fatigue and ergonomics not just safety from hazards and accidents. He said departments need to conduct their hazards identification and risk assessment (HIRA) that can be used to guide procurement on the kind of PPE required.

Mr Leggaba also said that it is important for the institution to have trained first aid providers and first aid kits where they are most visible with the names of trained personnel that can be able to use them. He said this makes things easier in case of an emergency as anyone close by can be able to contact the first aider for assistance.

Other issues attendants were made aware of were the use of fire extinguishers and evacuation procedures.

BOU EXTENDS ITS COMPASSION TO SOS CHILDREN VILLAGE IN TLOKWENG



BOU Management with SOS Mother for the House

Botswana Open University has recently refurbished one of the houses in SOS Children's Village in Tlokweng. The gesture came as one of the University's Corporate Social Responsibility initiatives.

The Deputy Vice Chancellor, Corporate Services Ms Lesedi Lesetedi said this initiative was in line with the National Strategy, Vision 2036 and even the Sustainable Development Goals that have all been embedded in the University Strategy.

The DVC said that a gift may come in any form and magnitude but they are all of equal importance. She said it is the responsibility of all citizens to care for one another especially the under privileged urging other institutions and organisations to come forth and assist SOS.

Ms Lesetedi said the renovations included the installation of ceramic tiles, ceiling, painting of the house inside and outside and other accessories that needed to be changed.

The SOS National Director Mr Motshwari Kitso in welcoming the guests said SOS was founded in 1985 and started its operations in 1987 and has since assisted more than 695 children who were mostly orphans and vulnerable children, (OVCs).

Mr Kitso added that they managed to establish a Village in Francistown in 1998 and another in Serowe in 2007. He said that these villages are meant to assist the Government by taking care of these children. Looking at the economic developments of the country Mr Kitso said that they had thought the number of children coming to SOS would have decreased over the years but that was not to be as it has rather increased.

The National Director also cited that the

Villages we first meant for locals but due to the increasing need, it now has children of various nationalities. In 2015, SOS introduced the short-term care where children would later be released to their parents or relatives but this is failing due to circumstances beyond their control as most children end up staying longer.

Mr Kitso said SOS had come up with a social and physical integration initiative where homes are now going to be set up within local communities. The Director said they have managed to establish 7 homes of this nature so far in Gaborone, Serowe and Francistown. He pleaded with those in attendance and the Government for sponsorships saying they welcome it in any form.

A representative from the School of Education of Botswana Open University (BOU) Ms Moses informed attendants that they adopted the House in SOS in 2014 providing groceries on a three (3) months interval and some clothing mainly in December. She said the School was later joined by staff members from the School of Social Sciences in the project. The two Schools of Social Sciences and Education have so far bought a TV and a decoder for the house. She said they wanted to do more but ran out of resources and thus approached the Corporate Relations and Marketing Department to assist with funds from CSR.

Kgosi Korwe representing Mothusa Kgosi ya Batlokwa, Kgosi Michael Gaborone, thanked the University for a job well done. He however encouraged SOS and the Government to benchmark in developed countries on ways to improve these villages citing Australia as an example. Kgosi further urged the local community and organisations to be part of institutions like SOS saying that it is about time we rely less on external donors.

Deputy Vice Chancellor, Prof. Kgomotso Moahi, presented the children of the House and their mother with tokens. Also in attendance were the SOS community, BOU management, village leadership, SOS stakeholders and partners.



SOS National Director Mr Motshwari Kitso



DVC, Ms Lesedi Lesetedi Unveiling the Plaque



SOS Community



BOU Representatives