

BOTSWANA YOUTH FOR SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT ASSOCIATION

JAN 2020– JUNE 2020 REPORT



“where we all can”

A group of approximately ten people, mostly Black, are smiling and looking towards the camera. They are arranged in a circle, with some wearing green headwraps. The background is a bright, slightly overexposed outdoor setting. The image is framed by a white border with yellow dots at the corners.

**FROM BYFSD VOLUNTEERS AND
MANAGEMENT**

THANK YOU

**"AN ACT OF KINDNESS CAN REACH A
WOUND ONLY COMPASSION CAN
HEAL!" -STEVE MARABOLI**

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Botswana Youth for Social Development (BYFSD) saw a number of great triumphs in the year 2019 to date, having launched the following 3 programs:

Literacy, arts and crafts program; BYFSD works with 42 children from Bontleng Primary School. The school is one of the poorest urban communities in Botswana with children coming from child headed households, those that are taking care of sickly grandparents and some that live in beer depots and are exposed to many dangers. The program keeps the children longer at school from 1400hrs to 1630hrs getting extra tuition on Mathematics, Science and English. The arts and crafts part of the program is for stimulation of their minds and to enhance their skills.

Woodworks and design program; Our wood works and design workshops are fun and practical classes that encourage participants to explore their creative talents and abilities and to produce saleable products. Through basic sewing lessons, coaching, and mentorship, our wood works and design workshop is a space that inspires opportunities for small designer business.

Beauty spa program; The Beauty Spa program will run in conjunction with partnering beautician who will be a sponsor through providing this program for participants, consists of beauty training classes for learners who envisage beauty as a career and/or a business. These courses will cover business ethics & etiquette as well as various spa treatments including facials, massage, nails, and waxing/threading. Furthermore, BYFSD took some big steps and established two (2) fund raising initiatives being the Thrift Shop and the Haven Café for hosting events and sales of food on weekdays.

There was great hope for the association to carry on with great triumphs in the year 2020, beginning the year with a number of bookings and great fundraising strategies that would help maximize work in the community. The Haven has employed 5 young people who worked in the café and keep the grounds clean. However, BYFSD was faced with a challenge when the BYFSD Center was broken into mid-January 2020 which led to a redirection of funds into replacing all items stolen and damaged as well as improving the security at the center. The burglary affected our woodworks and design program, beauty spa program and the thrift shop as most items taken were equipment used to carry out these programs.

The association then focused on coming up with strategies to increase fundraising and also minimize overhead costs by working with other community stakeholders. In February of 2020 BYFSD got into a contract with a Tuition service company (Educe Tuition Services) to provide tuition services and revision of booklets for our Literacy program in exchange for rental space at the BYFSD center.

Furthermore, the association expanded its wood works and design program by incorporating sewing and design of hair extensions wigs. Two (2) youth with expertise in this area were afforded the opportunity to acquire rental space at center at a subsidized price. The two, Alex Dikgole and Kabelo Leatlhama would also responsible for providing apprenticeship to our design program participants.

However, due to the Covid 19 pandemic BYFSD plans we adversely affected. The association was forced to stop operating during the 28-day lock down of April 2020. The center re-opened its offices on the 8th June 2020 and the association is working towards reviving all three programs above together with the fund raising initiatives. This also call for compliance with the Covid 19 requirements in the workplace and adaptation to the new way of doing things in general. However, this is proving rather difficult because of poor internet connectivity at times and lack of technological resources.

The Soup Kitchen

The soup kitchen program came to a halt at the end of April 2019 due to lack of sponsorship, which we still struggle to find. The association came together to find ways of reviving the soup kitchen even without sponsors in an effort to continue assisting those in need with free meals. It is on this basis that; the BYFSD Haven café was set up. BYFSD had identified two child headed households in Bontleng and White City which were provided with meals daily from the café.

This also came to a complete stand still owing to the Covid 19 pandemic. The Haven Cafe could no longer continue with its services because of the lockdown. However, the association continued to communicate with the families during lockdown to facilitate with any assistance they needed. Our hope is that two families and any other family with similar needs will be registered for the food relief program that the government that has always been in place before the lockdown.

The Soup Kitchen was set up to operate from June to September annually. The aim is not only to provide food but also to provide warm clothing for winter at selected venues such as hospitals.

WOODWORKS & DESIGN PROGRAM

Our woodworks and design program was set to begin in June of 2019 through the sponsorship of St Luke's foundation and the assistance of the Gaborone city council, African Wood works and LeSweedy Designs. Gaborone City Council holds the office that manages social workers in the areas BYFSD has targeted to assist which are some of the disadvantaged and marginalized communities in Gaborone such as Bontleng, White City and Old Naledi.

Gaborone City Council was to assist us through identifying participants from disadvantaged and marginalized communities and so we encourage them to apply for BYFSD programs. This was done to ensure that youth applying for the program have social workers who care for them and also to enable the association to track the change that our programs are making in the lives of the youth taking our programs. Further, because the program did not have a budget to transport the participants to and from the center, the social workers were to assist in ensuring that those who apply are determined to complete the programs and have the perseverance to attend all classes to ensure maximum impact.

All equipment required for the programs were purchased in advance using funds acquired from St Luke Foundation and stored at the center awaiting commencement of the programs. Unfortunately, the BYFSD center was broken into in 14th January 2020 and woodworks and design equipment together with clothing and cosmetics in the thrift shop were stolen. At the time the association was already in consultations with Guidance and Counselling Departments at Secondary schools within the above mentioned locations who had agreed to assist in registering participants for the programs. This came to a standstill as the association had to redirect all funds to the replacement of equipment and increasing security at the BYFSD center.

The association still holds a partnership with Alex Dikgole, a tailor and Kabelo Leatlhama, the owner of Krystal Designs (Interior Design and Construction Company). Mr Dikgole is to provide basic training on sewing and design. BYFSDA is still working on another partnership with a local trader in wood finished furniture to provide apprenticeship for Woodworks participant. The Covid 19 pandemic has set the program back by at least another 3 months, however, preparation is underway to begin program as soon as possible. The association will be forced to reduce the number of participants in line with the prevailing Covid 19 requirements.

Beauty Spa Program

BYFSD was unable to begin this program due to a lack of participants in the year 2019. The program was set to begin in January of 2020 at the BYFSDA center through the assistance of guidance and counselling departments at secondary schools to facilitate registration of participants who just completed their senior year.

The program was set to run over a period of 5 months per year with only two sessions per week for a total of 6 hours per week. The association was working on a partnership with a local training institute, SHANAAZ Institute of Beauty Therapy for an annual sponsorship of P18, 000.00 worth of one (1) week make up courses. The break-in at the center halted the takeoff of the program. Our proposition to the institution was to sponsor six (6) of our top performing participants (one participant every 2 months) The one (1) week make up course will guarantee participants certification providing them with a formal reference in their quest to make a living out of the training.

Furthermore, BYFSD has proposed that students enrolled at SHANAAZ for full time courses should facilitate the Beauty Spa program as part of their projects, subject to their availability and schedules. Through this partnership the two organizations will be working together towards socially empowering young people to change their lives and those that may be dependent on them.

The Literacy and Arts and Crafts Program

BYFSD adopted 41 children providing Mathematics, English and Science tuition to stand 4 to 7 students during school semester breaks from May 2019 to November 2019. This program also provided lunch snacks as the sessions were done after school for a period of 2 hours. Based on our assessments the literacy levels are quite damning and also show that there is a lot more that needs to be done for children living disadvantaged communities to improve their confidence and assertiveness. The students proved to be quite creative and enjoy arts and crafts.

The program adopted the phrase **“we are stars”**. This slogan is used by all the students regardless of their term marks or abilities when it comes to academics or crafts. This we believe has seen to the improvement of students in various ways some improved their marks at exam time and some started showing astounding levels of confidence and assertive that we did not see at the beginning of the program.

The new school term began on the 21st January 2020 and a new request was submitted for the literacy program. There was a long delay in providing a list of students as the schools had already stated that there were no teachers available to facilitate registration for the program. The program requires that a teacher be available for purposes of monitoring as required by the Ministry of Basic Education.

Due to Covid 19 pandemic, schools were closed abruptly on 18th March 2020 to curb the spread of Covid 19. The program therefore could not go on as it required personal interaction of tutors and students. This abrupt closure of schools and lack of funding made it difficult to come up with ways to assist our students. The students do not have technological gadgets and the knowhow that would have enabled the tutorials to continue virtually.

Private institutions and financially able households were able to acquire revision material online which further marginalized the communities we work with. The government made various efforts to enable learning during the State of Emergency. However, these efforts paid very little attention to those at the bottom of the food chain where the only family member with a smart phone is also an essential worker and had to work through the lockdown. The efforts also assumed that all households have access to a television and electricity which is not the case.

The pandemic has highlighted another need that is necessary for this program to reach its maximum potential, being access to virtual platforms of education for every student. Furthermore, it also highlighted that fully equipped libraries are an essential service in marginalized communities to provide access to learning material for children from disadvantaged and marginalized backgrounds.

Therefore, as a mitigating plan, we hope to solicit audio Bluetooth speakers and record all the teaching materials so that the kids can use such to revise as a way to deal with the Covid 19 social distancing protocols.

MILESTONES

Through the literacy and arts and craft program, 50% of the students that were enrolled managed to attain over 50% in their Standard 7 final examination. This in overall contributed immensely in the general school results. This proves that the little time spent with the students was enough to make an impact and for the association this was a significant outcome.

As the association has been struggling with raising funds especially for rentals, the association was able to conclude an agreement with a youth owned local tuition company to rent out one of the offices for a subsidized fee and also provide free tuition services pro bono to the association.

Throughout this pandemic we have been able to keep all our volunteers who continue to assist in the day to day running of the association. This gives us some level of assurance that we can still pursue our purpose and mandate once this pandemic is over.

CHALLENGES

Due to COVID 19 social distancing protocols especially in public spaces including schools, the government has advised all learning institutions to reduce the number of learners in classrooms to avoid overcrowding. This has led to schools introducing double shifts across the country including for young learners. Therefore, this has provided setbacks as there is only limited time in between the shifts, which makes it hard to bring together most of the learners.

Moreover, due to COVID 19 health protocols, we have been advised not to donate or sell any pre loved or pre used clothes, meaning that the Thrift Shop cannot make any sales to the public until the pandemic ends. This has led to loss in income for the Center, increasing our budgetary crisis as we struggle to pay rent and our n volunteers.

Furthermore, the association has been affected by the unplanned and abrupt lockdowns that are imposed by the government and mostly happening at times when we hope to implement some of our plans in place for recovery. This has contributed to the delay of starting out other programs.

WAY FORWARD

The association plans to do the following;

- Solicit audio Bluetooth speakers in order to record teaching and revision materials for learners to use in classes or at home
- Continue to seek for sponsorships and donations from individuals, private companies and the government. The association is open to partnering with other local or international organizations who share the same mission and vision with us. The aim is to encourage and participate in collaborative efforts that will empower and develop young people across all borders.
- Upon lifting restrictions of social gatherings by the government, we shall continue with providing venue services for the public to host small events at a fee as part of raising funds for the center.
- Host fundraising activities like games night, open mic, karaoke etc.

CONCLUSION

Botswana Youth for Social Development Association would like to thank you all for being part of our journey to bring change. Each donation has played a great role in providing hope, empowering lives and giving back dignity to those that are in need of assistance. Furthermore, the association was also able to identify other needs within the hospital and made recommendations to other civil societies aligned to such needs. Poverty and poor health worldwide are irrefutably linked, with poverty being both a cause and a consequence of poor health. Poverty increase the chances of poor health while poor health in turn traps communities in poverty. By providing a meal for those in need, we collectively say to those in need that there is hope and that change will come. The other programs of the association then provide the skills, the knowhow, the courage and the self-confidence that the world can be a place ***“where we all can...change our future, be self-sufficient and realize to our greatest potential.***

JOURNEY WITH BYFSD



SOUP KITCHEN INITIATIVE AT INCEPTION



SOUP KITCHEN COMMUNITY REVIEWS AND VOLUTEERS SERVING A MEAL



LITERACY AND ARTS AND CRAFTS PROGRAM UNDERWAY



BEFORE CLASS CHECK INS WITH STUDENTS



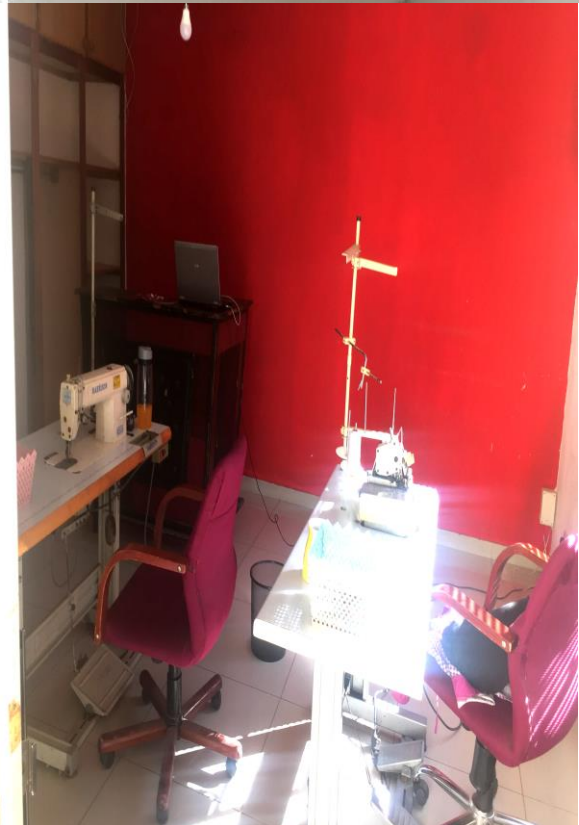
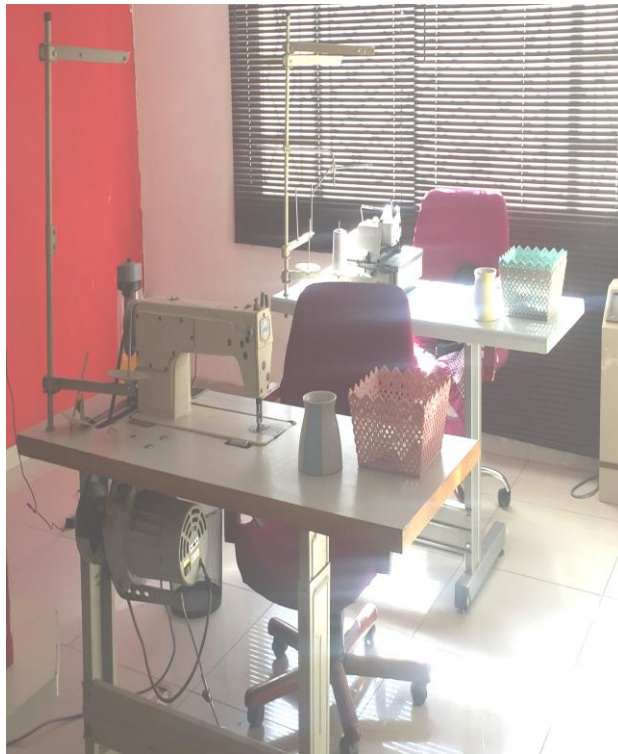
BYFSD CULTURAL EXCHANGE FUNDRAISER



GAMES NIGHT AND EVENT HOSTING



SMALL EVENTS VENUE AND SET UP



WOOD WORKS AND DESIGN PROGRAM CLASS



THE THRIFT SHOP



LITERACY AND ARTS AND CRAFTS PROGRAM SUPPLIES



BEAUTY SPA AND COSMETICS ROOM



PROGRAMS AND FUNDRAISING FLYERS



PROGRAMS AND FUNDRAISING FLYERS