

REPORT of the 1st year of the 2020-2022 Biennial

Defa ACKAH

Area 1

SENEGAL SIERRA -LEONE COTE D'IVOIRE

Area 1 Director (D18)
BIENNIAL 2020/2022

As AREA 1 director, and serving as a connection between the District Governor and the CLUBS of Sierra-Leone, Senegal and Côte d'Ivoire, allow me to present to you, in a few minutes, a report of this 1st year of the current Biennale.

Travel from one country to another being quite complicated due to the Covid pandemic, I tried to be in close contact with the 3 club presidents, especially via whatsapp.

We had a really good and frank collaboration.

I.The Freetown Club (Sierra-Leone): (1970)

A single club which currently has 37 members. The very dynamic president, Marcella Jones, was able to give energy to her team and all its members, during this first period from September 2020 to June 2021, followed by the preparation of the district conference.

Despite the covid pandemic, Zontian activities went well overall, face-to-face or virtual:

- 8th November 2020 : Installation ceremony of the newly elected President and Board members for the biennium 2020-2022

Then there was:

- conferences led by panelists
- interviews in the local press, and on television
- visits to schools and high schools
- A ceremony of tribute and decoration to those who are involved in one way or another in the empowerment of women and girls.

- A virtual conference debate on physical and sexual violence against women.
- 14th February 2021 : Valentine day celebration with a virtual social meeting with speeches and toasts by Zontians
- distribution of sanitary and hygienic materials in schools and communities
- 13th June 2021:Annual thanksgiving service celebrated at a Methodist Church
- A fundraising lunch in June 2021

As you can see, the Freetown club has been active, trying to keep up with the Zonta international schedule.

A detailed and illustrated report of this first period 2020/2021, was made by President Mr Jones, which you can find on the District 18 website

I had with the Freetown club, 2 zoom meetings, with the president and her members (the first to get to know each other and to discuss, and the second for the preparation of the conference in the presence of the governor).

Apart from recruiting new members, the Freetown club has no major problems.

II. The Abidjan club (CÔTE D'IVOIRE) : 1970

Only one club which has 27 members to date. I am a member of the Abidjan club, so in close collaboration with President Olga Coulibaly.

The club meets regularly, either face-to-face (with masks and barrier measures because of the Covid) or virtually by Zoom.

The president is also dynamic and regularly motivates her troops, and always reminds us of the need to bring in new members.

Various activities were carried out during this period of the biennial with:

- Conference debates, particularly in schools and high schools
- Statements in the media (local television and newspapers)
- A blood donation ceremony at the Abidjan blood transfusion center.
- Posters at the main crossroads of the city, during the 16 days of activism, to say "no to violence against women"
- A Christmas tree for needy children
- Donations of food and mattresses to orphan girls a few kilometers from Abidjan.

- A planting of roses and shrubs at the Bingerville botanical garden
- A year-end dinner in June 2021

All in all, the Abidjan club have had a fairly dense and rather positive year in terms of Zonta International calendar activities.

The detailed report was made by the president. You can find it on the District 18 website.

III. The Dakar club (Senegal): (1970)

A single club of 14 members (there is one member who withdrew at the start of the biennial) whose president is called: Khadija Diakhate Camara.

This year 2020-2021 has been particularly difficult for the club of DAKAR;

In March 2021, there was social unrest with breakages, looting and 4 deaths.

The first wave of covid manifested itself with all its inconveniences (confinement, curfews, closure of restaurants and public places, deaths of friends, acquaintances and very close relatives ...)

As a result, some members had the covid, others lost parents and the club's statutory meetings no longer took place.

It should be noted that there were nevertheless two activities during this first period of the biennial:

- A distribution of anti-covid masks in October 2020 in a high school
- Donations in kind for a nursery in the suburbs of DAKAR, with the help of a Zonta club from SWEDEN

The club did not receive any money in its fund, for lack of activities and the international and district contributions were paid at the last moment, thanks to the goodwill of some members, who did not want the club to disappear.

I had a zoom meeting, in February 2021, with the president and her members, to get to know and talk about the internal problems of the club, in the virtual presence of Governor Orè.

The second meeting scheduled for September 2021, to talk about the conference, could not take place, due to timing concerns.

This is a club that must and can revitalize itself. I plan to go to DAKAR in February 2022 to see what is wrong there, and try to help them as best I can, with the advice of the district governor.

Remotivation and remobilization of the members are essential. DAKAR must hear again about the Zonta club through their media.

IV. Conclusion

I sincerely hope that the collaboration between all these clubs and myself will be even closer during this second period of the 2020-2022 biennial.

My big concern remains the DAKAR club, which I will visit as soon as possible.

In addition, we must recruit, recruit, recruit and rejuvenate our clubs.

This is a real challenge for all of us, although the sanitary period is still a drag, but we only say: "Who wants, can. »!

- A lot more money-generating activities should also be done.
- Consideration should be given to the creation of Z and Golden Z clubs for each of these 3 clubs in the Area 1.
- Think about the creation of a second club, especially for Abidjan and Freetown.

We are therefore going to tackle all these different problems during this last period of the 2020-2022 Biennale.

Thank you.