

SEP QUALIFIES AS PREMIER SKILLS MENTOR COACH:

Society Empowerment Project, Oyugis, in Western region of Kenya, Nyanza Province, Rachuonyo South district was successfully represented in the Premier Skills Phase II, a course that focused on mentoring other coaches. This opportunity comes to Kenya as collaboration between the Premier league in England and British Council.

The second phase of the course takes place after a competitive evaluation and selection of phase I participants, where in Kenya; there were a total of 48 participants. Of this number, only six qualified to the second level. The Phase II course conducted in Nairobi Kenya, comprised of other countries like Uganda, Malawi, Botswana and Kenya. A total of 24 participants were involved in the training.

Course Purpose:

The second level Premier Skills Mentor Coaches Course was very objective in nature. The course was not about developing coaches' skills to coach higher level or elite players, but to be able to effectively focus on community development through football as the core theme, with the mentor coaches trained to develop their project leadership and management skills. The course hence focused on various related topics during the entire six days' duration:

Opening Ceremony:

The luncheon of the Premier Skills level II was hosted at the British High Commissioner's residential at Muthaiga, Nairobi. In preparation to the event, participants had a lot to present from their community work, as well as practically conduct coaching session to school pupils purposefully invited to the event. The presentations were organized such that each country had an exhibition board to show case their community work.



On the left is Festus Juma of SEP working on his work in in the morning session in readiness to present at the exhibition, while Charles Onyimbo of Moving Mountains – Ulamba pins his presentation at Kenya's exhibition board at the British High Commissioner's home in Nairobi.

Participants took good part of the morning session learning on effective communication and giving straight answers to questions. This was aimed at preparing them to answering questions from the media who were present at the exhibition. Every country had the opportunity to explain their work to other

guests in the function, including the media, teachers, other representatives from local and international institutions and government officials.



Premier Skills Mentor Coaches consulting during morning session as they prepare for the exhibition; on the right are guests, pupils, host and mentor coaches pausing for a photo shortly after the demonstrations.

During the exhibition, there were also several ongoing activities in the compound, including soccer coaching sessions. The Mentor Coaches had the opportunity to display their coaching prowess to the guests during the event, as they worked with the school pupils on practical sessions.



Premier Skills Mentor Coaches and the Premier League coaches in a practical coaching sessions, taking the pupils through different sessions including warm ups. The sessions were characterized with much fun, as the children enjoyed every moment of the session.

Speeches

Speeches were delivered by different personalities, starting by the British High Commissioner, Robb Macaire. In his speech, he acknowledged the good work of the British Council and Premier League in coming up with the Premier Skills project. He noted that football is growing up very rapidly, and expected to see Kenyans also taking the opportunity and securing playing chances in England. He referred to the case of MC Donald Mariga, a Kenyan International Player (currently with Inter Milan), who missed his chance to join Manchester City. He confirmed that he tried his best to see Mariga through, but it didn't work out.



British High Commissioner Mr. Robb delivering a speech during the luncheon of Premier Skills level II, a function he hosted at his residential in Nairobi.

Football has proved to be the only universal language, the language that even the deaf can hear, with the kindness that the blind can see. With premier Skills in Kenya, we expect to improve football in the country, by not only focusing on winning or losing our matches, but also taking into account formulating and implementing community development projects through football. This is all about Premier Skills. In Kenya, there are currently only 5 organizations working in the field of Community development through football, and this is as a result of their involvement in the Football for Hope (FFH) movement. These organizations include SEP in Oyugis, MYSA in Nairobi, Moving Goal Posts in Kilifi, Vijana Amani Pamoja in Nairobi, and Kenya Community Sports in Eldoret. All these five organizations are members of the Global

streetfootballworld Network, and implementing partners of the Football for Hope Movement. FFH is the strategic alliance between FIFA and streetfootballworld.

After Premier skills level II in Kenya, we expect the number of organizations using football for community development to increase, as other three were brought on board; Carolina for Kibera, Ambassadors in Sports and Moving Mountains. The trained mentor coaches will also be able to replicate the skills in their local communities, thus increasing the number of beneficiaries through multiplier effect.



From left is Kate Hodgkinson, Media Operations Coordinator at Premier League, England, giving her speech during the luncheon. Second left is Alison Coutts, the British Council Kenya Director, giving her speech at the event. She appreciated the premier league coaches for their dedication to conducting the training in Kenya and for other countries in Africa. She also acknowledged with thanks the kindness of the British High Commissioner to host the luncheon at his residential in Nairobi. She encouraged the Premier Skills Mentor coaches to take seriously their learning session, and bring positive change to their communities at large. On the left is the Permanent Secretary in the Ministry of Youth and Sports, also giving his speech at the event. He assured the gathering of government's commitment to improving football activities in the country, rolling out the idea to the grass root levels. He referred to the UNICEF sponsored Talent Academy, aiming at developing youth talents in various fields as a pilot project towards nurturing youth talent including football. He called on the youth sports based organizations to access government funding to expand on their programmes.

Course Contents:

The course was well planned, targeting different topics on different days. The topics were very much interconnected, giving the mentor coaches easy time to connect the lessons as it progressed. The course contents included; Re engaging with coaching process, role model in football sessions for different age categories, review community development projects, practice questioning and feedback skills, observing and analyzing coaching practice, learning through football, developing ideas for project football activities, developing long term plans for football projects, familiarization with project planner, Step by step project planning for community development through football projects, skills development workshops linked to community development project planning and management, introduction to developing football leaders, working with young people to help them to develop football leadership skills, Role model sessions led by PL coaches, planning to deliver and individual action planning among others.

The content was so comprehensive that it gave practical idea on how to plan, implement, manage, evaluate, report and commission a project. It was well planned and delivered in the simplest language for effective understanding. Most of the times, some sessions were practically done in the field with mentor coaches, PL coaches and pupils as was appropriate.



PL Coach Adam explaining a point to the Premier Skills mentor Coaches at Moi International Sports Centre (Kasarani), Nairobi during a training

session. The sessions were organized into three main groups, so the training was rotational between the 3 PL coaches, and this gave the mentor coaches the opportunity to learn different topics within a session in the field.



PL Coach, Gareth, receiving feedback from mentor coaches, as fellow PL coach, Warren looks on. The sessions involved observers from within the mentor coaches, giving feed back to the coaches conducting a session, while the players also got the opportunity to comment on the session. It is important to give positive feedback, and leading questions where necessary to encourage coaches, it was realized during the training.



At the right is the panel from “FIFA” – (PL Coaches and British Council staff) listening carefully to presentations from the four countries, in bid of hosting “FIFA World Cup 2018”. At the centre are Malawi delegates, and far end is Kenya delegates. Uganda and Botswana too presented their bid, and were both “unsuccessful!”

It was then the time for bidding for “FIFA World Cup 2018!” Mentor coaches from the four countries were given the task to market their country, and convince the panel from “FIFA” why they should host “FIFA World Cup” 2018. This was meant to assess the ability to talk before a panel of sponsors, donors and other stake holders. It assessed the leaders’ ability to eloquently present their organization at different fora, through effective communication.

(At the end, Malawi won the bid, may be because of their good drawings, Kenya was poor in drawing!! But Kenya must have been number two, though it was not confirmed.)



From Left, coaches Festus and Charles receive pupils arriving for coaching session as PL Coach Gareth looks on. The pupils were useful in evaluating the mentor coaches by PL Coaches throughout their session. At the centre is Festus giving vote of thanks to the pupils, teachers, PL coaches, fellow Premier Skills mentor coaches and British Council staff and volunteer after the end of the session with the pupils. Far end is Premier Skill Mentor Coach Patricio and Helen from Malawi and Kenya respectively, helping giving capes as gifts to the pupils.



During closing ceremony, Premier Skills Mentor Coaches got the opportunity, each country representative, to give votes of thanks. On the left is Patricio from Malawi during his vote of thanks speech. At the centre is Patrick Wajero, Director Programmes at the British Council – Kenya, giving his votes of thanks to the PL coaches and Premier Skills Mentor Coaches, including staff and volunteers from B.C. On the far right is one of the participants, Alice Alylo (Carolina for Kibera) receiving her Certificate after successful completion of the course.

Achievements.

- The entire course was well planned and delivered
- The course met the mentor coaches' objectives of being effective project leaders and managers
- There was adequate time with the PL Coaches for any follow up or consultation.
- The training was very interactive and friendly.

Challenges:

- The organizations may not immediately commence replicating the skills in their local organizations due to lack of basic resources such as sports equipment and funding to initiate community development projects.

Way forward:

- British Council in the respective countries should follow up with the trained organizations and where possible, through the partnership with Premier League, give funding support to jump start the community development projects in the communities. The funding, if made available, will also help in large percentage, in acquiring sports equipment thus continuity of events.
- The British council in Kenya should follow up with the Ministry of Youth and Sports on the “funding” they have always talked of, if really it’s something on which to rely. Accessing such funds at the grass root level is next to impossible, for they are based on political goodwill; most of our organizations are not politically affiliated hence can’t secure the funds. The British council should take the ministry to task in supporting such sound projects like those just trained on Premier Skills level II Course, and where possible, be funded through B.C. (British Council)

Conclusion:

- Premier Skills Course is a project whose time has come. There is need to continue with the course, as new ideas are generated every second. This will keep the mentors at the required professional pace in this venture.

Report Compiled by;

Festus Juma,

Secretary – general,

Society Empowerment Project (SEP) – Kenya,

P.O. Box 75 – 40222

OYUGIS – KENYA.

+254 720 864 715

sepkenya@yahoo.com

You can also read this report at SEP website;

<http://www.streetfootballworld.org/network/all-nwm/society-empowerment-project/>