

DISTRICT GOVERNOR REPORT TO THE 2025 DISTRICT CONVENTION

The Area Leader Constitutional Area 8B, PCC Gbolagade Olabisi,
The DG Team,
DG Dr Jide Bello of D404 B3,
Past District Governors,
the Cabinet,
Lions and Leos of D418

1. INTRODUCTION

The service year commenced on 1st July 2024 with the optimism and goodwill that typically accompany the start of any leadership journey. However, my entry into office was marked by unexpected and sustained challenges—what I can only describe as a baptism of fire. These obstacles presented themselves in various forms throughout the year, testing my resolve and the strength of our District’s systems. Rather than allow these difficulties to derail our progress, I chose to stay focused on the vision I had set for this year and the goals outlined by Lions Clubs International. This approach demanded unwavering determination, discipline, and a firm commitment to our mission of service. With a clear plan, the support of a dedicated team, and the resilience from leading with purpose, I remained committed to delivering results for District 418 throughout the 2024–2025 service year.

2. VISION & THEME

My vision for leadership, developed during my term as 2nd Vice District Governor and refined through my service as 1st Vice District Governor, has remained consistent and purposeful. This 8-point vision provided the framework for our work this year and was brought to life through deliberate actions and collaboration with my team:

- **Membership Growth & Retention** – Attracting quality hands for quality service
- **Leadership Development** – Empowering Lions at all levels through training
- **Strong Structures** – Building a firm foundation for District 418
- **Quality & Impactful Service** – Delivering meaningful community service and improving reporting
- **LCIF Promotion** – Giving generously to support impactful projects
- **Improved Visibility & Image** – Enhancing public awareness of District 418
- **Leo Empowerment** – Nurturing future Lions through youth leadership
- **Strategic Partnerships** – Collaborating for sustainable development

My service year theme encapsulated these pillars: **“Inspire, Involve, Innovate.”** Each word represents a guiding principle: *Inspire* Lions to greater commitment, *Involve* members actively in service, and *Innovate* to meet the evolving needs of our communities.

3. SERVICE

Fellow Lions, our collective performance in service delivery this year has been outstanding. The target for service reporting across both Lions and Leos was set at 100%, and as of **21st May 2025**, we had carried out 1169 service activities, reaching 1,023,491 individuals, with a total of 204,240.52 volunteer hours contributed by 39,6711 volunteers. 97% of our 53 Lions and 25 Leos Clubs had carried out these activities, the shortfall being from the newly chartered Clubs. We took deliberate steps to ensure data integrity by avoiding duplicate reporting and inflated figures.

Notably, this is the first time District 418, as a District itself, has successfully carried out service activities across all eight global causes, empowering Clubs to participate and report without financial obligations. In response to International President Fabricio Oliveira's directive for each District Governor to prioritise two global causes, I selected **Vision** and **Diabetes**. However, we went a step further and delivered meaningful action in all eight areas as follows:

- **Childhood Cancer:** On 7th September 2024, we partnered with Lifeline for Childhood Cancer Ghana and Millennium Marathon to hold a **5km Awareness Walk/Jog/Run**.
- **Vision:** From 8–16 October 2024, **cataract surgeries were performed for 100 underprivileged individuals**, with transportation and meals provided. A Vision Awareness Walk was also held on 14th October in East Legon, Accra.
- **Diabetes:** A major **screening** event took place at the **National Mosque** on 8th November 2024. Throughout November, **we posted daily awareness messages on social media**. On 26th September 2024, we broke ground for the construction of an 8-bed Emergency Diabetic Ward and Outpatient Clinic at Suntreso District Hospital in Kumasi.
- **Youth:** Under a new agreement with Book Aid International, we secured around **6,000 books**, which were distributed on 16th December 2024 to **11 basic schools in underserved communities** across the Greater Accra, Eastern, and Volta Regions.
- **Hunger:** Two major activities took place in December. On 13th December, we partnered with the Ga Kingdom's Queen for Youth and Children, Naa Ayele Nobaatse I, to **distribute breakfast to persons with disabilities and head porters in Accra**. On 24th December, we collaborated with aYo Ghana, Softlife Ghana, DrugNet, and Samospharma to **provide food, healthcare, and clothing to elderly residents in Dodowa**.
- **Disaster Relief:** Following a fire at the **Senchi Ferry Health Centre**, the District used an LCIF District Community Impact Grant to fund renovation works. **The refurbished facility** will be commissioned on 29th May 2025.
- **Environment:** This year, our environmental efforts focused on sustainability, access to clean water, and community beautification. In the Eastern Region, we initiated the provision of **a mechanised borehole for Adetowa No.1, a community of over 1,000**

people whose primary water source had been severely polluted by illegal mining activities. This will be ready early in June 2025.

To support proper waste management and hygiene, we also donated **two fixed waste bins to Achimota Hospital**. In addition, the District is leading an **ambitious tree-planting campaign, sourcing 10,000 seedlings** for Clubs to plant in their local communities. Each Club is expected to contribute by planting at least 200 trees during June 2025, reinforcing our commitment to environmental restoration and climate resilience.

- **Humanitarian Needs:** The construction of the **8-bed Emergency Diabetic Ward and Outpatient Clinic at Suntreso District Hospital**—our Legacy Project—is nearly complete and expected to be commissioned in June 2025.

Several Clubs also undertook exemplary, high-impact service initiatives. A standout example is the Princess Marie High Impact Hunger Project by the Accra Ubuntu Lions Club, which included the renovation of a Nutrition Centre, the establishment of a Skills Training Shed, and a Milling Room—all fully furnished and equipped.

We gratefully acknowledge Lions and non-Lions who contributed significantly to the Legacy Project. Donors of GHS5,000 and above will be recognised on a commemorative plaque on the building in Bronze, Silver, Gold, and Platinum categories.

To every Lion who gave their time, energy, and resources to service, thank you. Your physical, moral, and financial support has touched countless lives.

4. MEMBERSHIP & MISSION 1.5

We began the service year on 1st July 2024 with **47 Clubs** and a total membership of **1,291**. Our membership goals were ambitious yet achievable: to charter **7 new Clubs** with 140 members, recruit **119 new members**, and secure a **net gain of 21** members.

As of 20th May 2025, our total number of members stood at **1411**. We have welcomed **302 new members**, 123 charter and 179 new, but have also experienced **182 drops**, reflecting a recurring challenge—growth without retention. While we are pleased to have made significant additions, the high dropout rate indicates a need for greater focus on member engagement and sustainability. So far, seven (7) new Clubs have been chartered: **Ho Adido Virtual Leo-Lions Club** (by Tema Oak); **Kumasi Heritage Virtual Leo-Lions Club** (by Kumasi Royal); **Accra Novelty Lions Club** (by Accra Premier); **Kpando City Lions Club** (by Accra Premier); **Westland Boulevard Virtual Leo-Lions Club** (by Tema Oak); **Accra Emerald Lions Club** (by Adenta Mountain View) and **Tema Meridian Virtual Lions Club** (by Tema Community 25 and Tema Oak)

However, we must address the cycle of gaining and losing members in close succession. This underlines the importance of recruiting *quality* members who are aligned with our values and ensuring they are properly inducted, engaged, and supported within their clubs, as well as being mindful of the language we use on our various platforms. New members have dropped because they cannot cope with the abusive attacks and disrespect to authority.

A growing concern is the non-payment of dues, particularly to LCI, as when due. Several Clubs face the risk of **financial suspension** if they are unable to meet their obligations. It is important to reiterate that **LCI does not waive unpaid dues** but may approve manageable **financial plans**. Relating to District dues, as we advance, I recommend that Clubs with outstanding dues with genuine challenges be offered **structured payment plans**, where a percentage of the arrears is paid alongside current dues, with the remainder spread across an agreed period while being accorded good standing status over the time agreed for the payments. There is no provision—written or implied—that District dues can be waived. Allowing such waivers sets a dangerous and unsustainable precedent that undermines the financial integrity of the District. Furthermore, LCI allows that Clubs owing District dues be placed on status quo at the District level, as part of administrative controls. This is not punitive but a necessary measure to protect the overall health of the District and uphold transparency and accountability.

5. LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

This year, we made notable strides in leadership development, building the capacity of Lions and Leos to serve with confidence, competence, and purpose.

LCI-Supported Institutes

Two major leadership training programmes were successfully implemented:

- **Emerging Lions Leadership Institute (ELLI):** Held from 15–17 November 2024 at Erata Hotel in Accra. This became the first ELLI in District 418 to run **two classes**, training a total of **42 participants**. The response exceeded expectations, highlighting the growing hunger for leadership training among our new members.
- **Regional Lions Leadership Institute (RLLI):** Organised locally and held from 5–7 April 2025, also at Erata Hotel, with **28 participants**.

The District financially subsidised both Institutes, making them more accessible. These training programmes were well-attended and demonstrated significant improvement over the previous year's participation levels.

Additionally, although LCI discontinued the ALLI (Advanced Lions Leadership Institute) this year and did not approve a local Faculty Development Institute (FDI), two Lions from our District — **Lion Victor Kafui Agbenu** and **Leo-Lion Priscilla Anim** — were selected by LCI to attend the CA8 Regional FDI in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania. Both completed the training, bringing valuable expertise back to our District.

Local Leadership Training

We also implemented **quarterly in-person Club-level trainings**, delivered by our growing pool of FDI graduates. Each quarter focused on a specific theme: **Q1 (Aug–Sep):** Club Quality Initiative; **Q2 (Oct–Dec):** Lions Code of Ethics & Club Purposes; **Q3 (Jan–Mar):** Policy Practice – Board Policy Manual and Governing Documents; **Q4 (Apr–Jun):** Servant Leadership.

This structured and consistent training effort ensured that Lions and Leos, across various Clubs, benefited from foundational and practical leadership development.

Lions Learning Centre & Self-Learning

To promote continuous development, we encouraged self-learning through the Lions Learning Centre (LLC), where two topics per month were selected from August 2024 to May 2025. Lions who complete these self-learning modules will be recognised as early adopters at the end of the service year.

Orientation for New Members

New members have been receiving orientation both online and in person. Induction into Clubs is now preceded by this training and the payment of entrance fees and LCI dues, ensuring that new members begin their journey with knowledge, accountability, and commitment.

Leadership Development Grants

The District received **\$1,800** (plus a **\$1,200** Leo grant) for the ELLI Institute and **\$500** to support the Zone Chairpersons' Workshop. These grants played a crucial role in supporting our leadership initiatives this year.

6. LIONS CLUBS INTERNATIONAL FOUNDATION (LCIF)

This year, District 418 achieved significant progress with LCIF, both through financial contributions and effective utilisation of grants. These milestones reflect our growing commitment to global impact through local action.

LCIF Contributions

On 22nd October 2024, our annual LCIF contribution target was revised to **\$31,497.00**, a considerable increase over the expected 10% annual growth (which would have set the target at \$27,500). Despite last year's unmet target of approximately \$25,000, we accepted the challenge and successfully met it. As of 22nd May 2025, we had exceeded our target by over 106%, (206% total), with total funds raised and credited by LCI amounting to **\$65,155.37**, in this service year alone. By 30th June 2025, we expect the figures to be higher since LCI has yet to credit some payments. The goal of 118 individuals to contribute has been exceeded to 156; goal of 39 Clubs to contribute has exceeded to 47 Clubs.

Melvin Jones Fellows (MJFs) and Progressive MJFs

At the start of the service year (1st July 2024), District 418 had **123 MJFs** and **22 PMJFs**. As of 16th May 2025, those numbers had risen to **162 MJFs** (an increase of 39) and **38 PMJFs** (an increase of 16), including one recipient of the **5 Blue Sapphire Yellow Gold PMJF** designation.

This unprecedented growth reflects the increasing generosity and commitment of our Lions to LCIF's humanitarian mission. I wish to thank every Lion who contributed to this achievement and urge us to continue contributing to LCIF.

MJF / PMJF Network

To strengthen engagement, a WhatsApp group for all MJF and PMJF recipients in the District has been created. An in-person networking event was held on 16th February 2025, featuring light refreshments and an open discussion. The objectives of this group include:

Encouraging continued giving to LCIF and the Ghana Lions Charity Foundation (GLCF); Promoting member-driven fundraising within Clubs; Undertaking community projects as a collective. The group is convened by **Lion PZC Richard Awuku Aboagye** and is designed to be sustained beyond this service year as a standing support network for the District.

LCIF Grants

a. District Community Impact Grant (DCG) (\$14,769.00)

Received on 17th December 2024, this grant supported the **renovation of the Senchi Ferry Health Centre**, which had been partially destroyed by fire in 2023. The refurbished facility will be officially commissioned on **29th May 2025**.

b. Diabetes Grant (\$43,924.00)

A grant request to LCIF of \$43,954.00 for the **procurement of equipment and furnishing** for the District Governor's Legacy Project—the **8-bed Emergency Diabetic Ward and Outpatient Clinic** in Kumasi has been approved. The equipment and furnishing will be installed in the building for which funds were raised from individuals and corporate organisations. It is expected to be commissioned in June 2025.

c. Community Partnership Grant -Lions Quest (\$14,000.00)

To organise a teacher training workshop and to implement Lions Quest (Skills for Adolescence) in D418. This training will be held from 24-27 June 2025.

d. Diabetic Foot Project (Closed) – \$60,700.00 Total

This project, funded by an LCIF grant of **\$45,525.00** and a District match of **\$15,175.00**, in 2020 was officially closed in January 2025. Final reports and all required documentation, including the refund of unspent funds, were submitted to LCIF by the Project Administrator, PDG Helen Maku Obeng.

e. Caregivers' Hostel for Pediatric Cancer Patients – Agogo Hospital(on-going)

This project received \$100,000.00 from LCIF in 2020, with an additional \$30,008.00 matched by the District. Unfortunately, no progress reports have been submitted to date to the Cabinet, and the project remains incomplete. It is important that the Project Administrator, PDG David Owusu Anokye, takes immediate action to restore accountability and bring matters about the project to a conclusion. The integrity of our District's reputation with LCIF is at stake.

7. GHANA LIONS CHARITY FOUNDATION (GLCF)

The Ghana Lions Charity Foundation (GLCF) was established to provide timely support in response to emergency and disaster situations within the country. While the Foundation holds great promise, it requires **enhanced visibility and sustained fundraising efforts** to operate at

its full potential. This year, we continued to promote the GLCF through targeted messaging. The **LCIF Coordinator** played a key role in raising awareness and encouraging contributions, and so donations have been trickling in.

To strengthen the Foundation's operational capacity, the **Board of Trustees** convened on 20th February 2025 and made several strategic resolutions, including: Developing **clear operational modalities**; Appointing an **Administrator**; Establishing additional functions to improve governance and transparency

These steps are crucial to transforming the GLCF into a **responsive and impactful support mechanism** for urgent needs across Ghana. We urge Clubs and individual Lions to continue supporting this important initiative, both financially and through advocacy.

8. MARKETING & VISIBILITY

Marketing and visibility were top priorities for the 2024/25 service year, with a strategic focus on enhancing brand recognition, internal communications, and stakeholder engagement to amplify the presence of Lions Clubs International in Ghana, foster pride among Lions and Leos across District 418, and invite more hands to join our mission of service. Notably, the 2024/25 marketing and visibility efforts have yielded remarkable results. These achievements have laid a strong foundation for successive teams to build upon.

Strengthening Club-Level Marketing Capacity

- a. Club Presidents were encouraged and supported to appoint dedicated Club Marketing Chairpersons (MCs) to drive local visibility.
- b. A WhatsApp platform was created for all Club MCs to foster collaboration, share promotional materials, and provide ongoing support.
- c. A training session was organised for all MCs, focusing on their roles, expectations, and the resources available from LCI.

Content Creation and Internal Marketing

- a. We created and shared Photo-Story Books for my Club Visits to promote awareness of the District Governor's activities and to serve as a visual archive of her engagements.
- b. My **New Month Messages** and **Birthday Wishes** with pictures of celebrants were consistently shared, monthly, to help maintain morale, foster connection, and boost member satisfaction.

Media Engagement and Public Relations

- a. Strategic media visits were undertaken at the beginning of the service year to introduce the District's vision and service priorities.
- b. Collaborations were maintained with major media outlets to ensure consistent coverage of District activities. Stories were published across television, radio, print, and online platforms.

c. We issued a “Stop Galamsey” Press Statement, positioning Lions as strong environmental advocates and lending a voice to national conversations on illegal mining and environmental degradation.

Brand Visibility and Campaigns

a. The District launched the **Wear Lions Day Campaign**, encouraging members to wear attire from the Lions District cloth on the third Wednesday of each month to increase public visibility. The initiative was well received and widely adopted.

b. The Marketing Award Scheme was promoted to Clubs, encouraging them to innovate in their visibility strategies. Congratulations to Accra Golden Lions Club, which emerged as the 2024/25 winner for Constitutional Area 8.

Signature Event and Recognition

The District successfully hosted Lions Day with the United Nations. This landmark event was a powerful platform to demonstrate Lions' commitment to the UN's goals and engage key stakeholders.

Strategic Collaboration

Discussions were initiated with the Rotary Club of Ghana to explore joint service activities, following the model set by Lions International headquarters. Although not executed this year, the collaboration framework is in place for future engagements.

District Communication Channels

a. Three **District Quarterly Newsletters** (Vol. 6 Nos. 1–3) were professionally produced and distributed. These publications featured key Club and District service activities, fostering a sense of pride and increasing brand recognition both internally and externally. The 4th issue will come out in June.

b. **The Pride Newsletter (CA8)**: District 418 consistently submitted activity stories for publication, with features appearing in the November 2024, December 2024, January 2025, February 2025, and April 2025 editions.

c. **District Website**: Unfortunately, the District website was inactive for most of the year due to delays in restoring data and renewal issues from the previous provider. After extensive discussions and a Cabinet decision, a new service provider was engaged. Work is currently underway to launch the new site—www.lionsclubs-ghana.org—before the end of the service year.

9. DISTRICT ADMINISTRATION

This service year marked significant administrative developments for District 418, aimed at improving oversight, communication, and support for Clubs.

Region and Zone Structure

For the first time in District 418's history, we introduced **two administrative Regions**, each overseen by a **Region Chairperson** and supervising five Zones. Though the Constitution permits more Regions given our 47 Clubs, we adopted a phased approach by starting with two, ensuring manageability and effectiveness in our first year of implementation.

The District now operates through **10 Zones**, each Zone comprising 4–5 Clubs. This structure enhances Club supervision, facilitates targeted member support, and enables more effective membership growth and retention strategies.

Club Visits

All **47 Clubs** at the beginning of the 2024/25 year in the District were visited between **4th August and 1st September 2024**. These early visits were strategic, allowing us to identify each Club's unique challenges and provide timely support for the rest of the year.

During our interactions, several recurring issues emerged:

- a. **Navigating the New Lions Portal:** Many Clubs faced difficulties using the new system for activity and membership reporting. Guidance and troubleshooting were provided.
- b. **Overreach by Charter Presidents:** Charter Presidents of some clubs continued to exert control, resisting transitions and undermining subsequent leadership.
- c. **Guiding Lions Overstepping:** Some Guiding Lions remained overly involved long after their official roles ended, limiting Club autonomy.
- d. **Disrespectful Conduct on Digital Platforms:** A troubling trend emerged where some members used Club, Zone and District WhatsApp platforms to **disrespect leadership** under the guise of criticism. While feedback is always welcome, we must foster **respectful communication** that aligns with our values.

Lions were encouraged to actively explore the **LCI website** to better understand Lions' rights, responsibilities, and codes of conduct.

District Governor's Advisory Committee (Zone) Meetings

All 10 Zones held the three required quarterly meetings between August 2024 and March 2025, some of them as joint Zone meetings. These meetings were attended by key Club officers and conducted either in person or virtually, depending on logistics. The sessions provided valuable opportunities for peer learning, issue resolution, and performance tracking.

Region Seminars

Both Regions hosted impactful seminars; Region 1 Seminar was held on 12th April 2025 and Region 2 Seminar was held on 26th April 2025, which also incorporated an **induction ceremony** in celebration of World Lions Induction Day. These seminars, themed around membership growth, enhanced knowledge-sharing and inspired greater participation in District activities.

Cabinet & GAT Meetings

District administration was further strengthened through regular leadership coordination via Cabinet and GAT meetings. These were held as follows: **1st GAT & Cabinet:** 12–13 July 2024; **2nd GAT & Cabinet:** 25–26 October 2024; **3rd GAT & Cabinet:** 24–25 January 2025; **4th GAT & Cabinet:** 9–10 May 2025. Each meeting enabled effective planning, review, and reinforcement of the District’s strategic goals.

District Secretariat

To enhance accessibility and professionalism, a Leo-Lion was employed to manage the District Secretariat. This has proven to be a valuable step, ensuring visitors, partners, and members can reliably reach an operational office and receive timely assistance.

Quarterly “Virtual Time with Lions and Leos”

We introduced a **Quarterly Virtual Forum** to engage Lions and Leos not serving on District committees. These sessions featured briefings from the District Governor, Open Q&A; member feedback, suggestions, and clarifications on service and administration. These well-attended forums were held in **July & October 2024, January & March 2025**, and created a sense of inclusion, transparency, and shared purpose across the District.

Patent Rights

Within the service year, Tema Industrial approached us asking for permission to use the LCI Logo on diabetic bread they intended to produce for sale. We enquired from LCI on their behalf, and they were asked to use their Club’s logo.

In their response, we were also cautioned that individuals cannot use the LCI Logo to produce items for sale. If they did, then prior agreed royalties must be paid to the District; otherwise, it is only the District that can use the LCI logo to produce items for sale, which is a form of fundraising for the District. There is a letter sent to us confirming this directive.

Audit Report

Cabinet decided that Audit reports need to be sent to Clubs through their Presidents to ensure accountability and transparency in governance, and also to enable members to know what their contributions are used for. To this end, the available Audit report for the 2022-2023 service year has been sent to Club Presidents.

10. LEOS

We worked effectively with the Leos this year by offering them slots in institutes and assigning trainers to them whenever there was a need. We also encouraged ageing Leos to transition into Leo-Lions, and so 3 Leo Lion Clubs have been chartered this year.

There were plans from the previous year to have a cloth designed solely for the use of Leos. We took it up and asked Leos to present their design in an artwork competition, which was

done. The Leo Cloth has been produced, and the Leos will, from now on, discontinue the use of the Lions Cloth.

The Leo Constitution has also been approved this year to guide the operations of the Leo District.

11. AWARDS & ACHIEVEMENTS

Despite the challenges we faced, the 2024–2025 service year has been marked by several noteworthy achievements and recognitions, both locally and internationally. These successes are a testament to the hard work, creativity, and commitment of our Lions, Leos, and Clubs across District 418.

a. Accra Ubuntu Leo Club – International Leo Video Contest Winner

In **December 2024**, the Accra Ubuntu Leo Club emerged **winner of the LCI Leo Video Contest**, showcasing the innovation and vibrancy of our youth wing on the global stag

b. Merit Award – International Peace Poster Contest

In **February 2025**, **Master Young Albert Nii S. Quarcoopome**, a 13-year-old student from Tema Parents Association School (sponsored by Tema Gentlewomen Lions Club), won a **Merit Award** in the prestigious **37th Annual Lions International Peace Poster Contest**. His entry stood out among submissions from 65 countries and 600,000 participants. This is the **first time** a District 418 entry has received international recognition in this contest. He will receive **\$500 and a certificate**.

c. Accra Golden Lions Club – LCI International Marketing Award

In **April 2025**, the Accra Golden Lions Club won the **Lions International Marketing Award**, selected from among hundreds of global entries. This award reflects the Club's excellence in promoting Lions' values and visibility. Accra Golden will receive \$2000, a Trophy and registration Fee sponsorship for 4 persons to the 108th International Convention in Hong Kong.

d. International Commendation – LCIF Contributions

Also in April, the **Immediate Past International President and Chairperson of LCIF, Lion Dr Patti Hill**, sent a formal video message congratulating District 418 for **exceeding our LCIF contribution target**, making us the top-performing District in **Constitutional Area 8 (Africa)**.

e. Completion of Senchi Ferry Health Centre Renovation

In **May 2025**, we completed and commissioned the renovation of the **Senchi Ferry Health Centre**, a key District project funded by LCIF through a Community Impact Grant. This restored facility now serves thousands in an underserved area.

f. Legacy Project Near Completion

Our **District Governor's Legacy Project**—the 8-bed **Emergency Diabetic Ward and Outpatient Clinic** at Suntreso District Hospital in Kumasi —is now **95% complete** and is

expected to be commissioned before the end of the service year. This facility will serve as a lasting symbol of our commitment to sustainable, high-impact healthcare services

12. CHALLENGES

Delay in the Transition Process

A major administrative hurdle this year was the delay in the transition process from the previous administration. Despite several requests and interventions from the District and LCI, the essential documents and cheque books were only handed over in **November 2024, over four months** after the official start of the service year. This delay significantly hampered early operations and disrupted planning.

Negative Attitudes Toward Service

We also encountered a few Clubs and individuals within Clubs who **refused to cooperate** with the District for reasons best known to them. Some declined to pay District dues or participate in service activities.

Let us be clear: **service is governed by principles and structures**, and every Lion has both rights and responsibilities. Choosing to disengage due to perceived personal disagreements or entitlement undermines our collective mission. Just because poor behaviour is sometimes overlooked does not mean it is acceptable, or that future leaders will tolerate it. **We are building a strong foundation**, and that foundation must rest on **integrity, hard work, truth, transparency, accountability, and respect for rules**, not convenience or personal gain.

This year demanded difficult choices, which were made with a clear conscience and in alignment with my oath: **to serve without expectation of reward, material or otherwise**. The road was not easy. At every turn—whether it was resistance, falsehoods, veiled threats, or outright disrespect—we faced efforts to destabilise our progress. We remained focused. We persevered through the voices of **Tobiah and Sanballat**, and in the face of every attempt to distract or discredit us, we pressed on. I leaned on my faith and took strength from those Lions who stood with us, quietly but boldly.

To those who supported us despite fear of being attacked, who warned us of hidden plots, and who stood firm with us in public and private: thank you. Your courage, belief, and loyalty helped us to push forward and achieve what many thought was not possible. Some of these achievements have never been recorded in our District's history.

Let me leave you with a few reflections that sustained me during the storms: *“No one is more hated than he who speaks the truth.”* – Plato; *“Disrespect closes doors that apologies can never open.”*; *Success attracts enemies. Progress invites jealousy. If nobody hates you, you are not making it in life.* These words guided me, and they still do.

CONCLUSION

As this service year draws to a close, it is clear that **2024–2025 has been a year of remarkable achievement**, not just in the number of activities completed but in the quality of impact we made across our communities.

From record-breaking service initiatives and international awards to a stronger administrative structure and Legacy Projects, our successes **far outweigh the challenges** we encountered. Where there was doubt, we delivered. Where there was resistance, we responded with results.

Let us always remember why we serve: **to bring hope where there is despair, and to offer kindness where it is needed most**. As Lions, our greatest reward is not recognition, but the smile of someone whose life has been touched by our compassion. *“Be the reason behind someone else’s smile.”* May we all strive to serve the needy and underprivileged so that, one day, someone might look into our eyes and say, *“I want to remember your face so that when I meet you in heaven, I’ll be able to thank you again.”* **Service to God and humanity is all that truly matters.**

I am deeply grateful for the journey we have shared over the past three years on the District Governor’s ladder—especially this final year. **The good, the bad, and the difficult moments** have all contributed to a season of **growth, resilience, and transformation**.

I can confidently say: **I came, I saw, and I conquered.”**

Thank you all, and may God bless each of us as we continue to serve with heart and honour.

Lion Dr. Helena Asamoah-Hassan PMJF, GLCF
District Governor, 2024/2025