

GOLD Malawi 2011 Report

From the 26th July to 17th August I was a member of a team of 6 members of Girlguiding UK who went to Malawi, Africa. Our project was for 3 and a half weeks and our aim was to help develop Guiding in Malawi by working with Leaders and Patrol Leaders.

Week 1

Our first week of trainings involved working with Guiding's National Trainers and the Chief Guide. The training took place at MAGGA (Malawian Girl Guide Association) headquarters. There are 25 National Trainers within the organisation and we had a maximum of 15 turn up for training.

The 1st day of training began with some icebreakers so we could get to know each other better. We then continued with recapping the first aid skills they had learnt the previous year and we began looking at the topics of what a successful training session is and identifying relevant resources. We discussed how to ration resources and looked at alternative resources they could use so don't have to spend lots of money but they can still have a varied programme.

The 2nd day of training was focused on the topics of time management and outdoor activities. For this we looked at the number of hours in a week and day and the ladies planned a 24 hour camp and how they could divide the time up. The outdoor activities we taught them was treasure hunts and scavenger hunts, where we gave them an example and then they produced their own.

The 3rd day of training we looked at what a good presentation was and some of the ways to engage an audience. The ladies did their own presentations for us where they told us more about MAGGA. We also looked at why Evaluating sessions are important and showed them various evaluation methods which they could use. We also covered how to deal with conflict where they were given different scenarios and they had to act out how they'd deal with various situations. In between the sessions we did some communication activities.

The 4th day of training we looked at what WAGGGS was and looked in detail at what the WAGGGS vision, mission statement and goals are. We did some more communication activities and taught them the World Song.

The 5th day of training was only a half day and we finished the training by looking at the history of Guiding on a timeline, more communication skills and why it's important to be a responsible citizen of the world. We gave the trainers a small gift and finished off with the songs we'd learnt that week which included the Crazy Elephant Song, Edelweiss and the Chicken Song.

Week 2

Week two training took place in the Southern Region of Malawi in Mangochi at St Augustine's Secondary School. The GOLD team were expecting to train Guide Leaders and Patrol Leaders. On each day three of the GOLD team trained the adults while three trained the under 18s. The age range of girls was in fact from age 9 to 17. Alongside a large age range there was a vast discrepancy in English speaking ability; many of the girl's English was extremely limited. We therefore used older girls to help with translation. We trained 46 under 18s and 27 over 18s throughout the week.

The 1st day of training began with making name badges and notebooks with the girls as they did not have pens or paper. After this the day was focused on Guide Promise activities. The girls

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played some games to help to learn their promise and then made a hand-print craft looking at things that help them to keep their promise. With the leaders we focused on outdoor activities and they got the chance to have a go at Scavenger Hunts and Treasure Hunts before preparing and completing their own trails and topics.

The second day of training with the under 18s began by splitting the girls into 5 patrols. We then looked at outdoor activities including scavenger hunts and treasure hunts. The girls over 14 then prepared a treasure hunt for the younger girls while the younger girls played communication games.

The third day of training with the under 18s focused on first aid and human rights. We looked at basic first aid such as the recovery position, choking and slings. In the afternoon human rights activities involved looking at basic needs and discussing what rights the girls would have on their own islands. The over 18s also focused on first aid, which they said was the one topic we were going to cover which they were most looking forward to learning about.

The fourth day of training with the under 18s looked at what their dream job was and what they needed to do in order for their dreams to come true. They also discussed the characteristics of what a good friend is and about how it is important to give compliments to others. The main topic we covered was on puberty where they looked at various myths and discussed the changes to a girl's body. The over 18s group focused on how to plan a camp. Topics looked at included budgeting for a camp, creating a timeline of things to do before camp and scenarios of possible problems on a camp. This was a very new topic for the participants as they have not been on camp before. We hope that the training will make going on camp a possibility. The day ended a little earlier due to preparing for a campfire in the evening. The campfire was great fun and the girls performing their own songs and we performed some traditional campfire songs including Land of the Silver Birch and Go Well and Safely.

The 5th day of training was a shortened training. We played various games and energisers with both age groups, sang songs and finished off the training with a farewell ceremony. The GOLD team and the participants all had a very fun, energetic and rewarding week of training.

Week 3

Week three training took part in Kawale Primary School, Lilongwe. The training was delivered to Regional Trainers. This was initially planned to be a 5 day training however MAGGA cut this to 4 days. Training on the first day was set to begin at 9am. Only 8 participants had arrived by 12pm. It was therefore decided that as so few participants had arrived for the first day of training, a timetable and list of expectations would be made and then training would begin from the next day.

The first full day of training was attended by 16 participants; training began with various icebreaker games and teaching new songs. Our first training topic was outdoor activities. We ran a scavenger hunt for the participants and then asked the participants in small groups to set their own scavenger hunts. We used this format again to look at treasure hunts. After lunch we looked at time management activities. Participants made a timetable of their week and discussed time spent on Guiding per week. After this participants were timed making straw towers.

Saturday 13th August - Day 2 of training. Today the training topics were WAGGS and World Guiding in the morning and First Aid in the afternoon. The morning began with sessions on

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brainstorming 'What makes a good leader' and group presentations on 'What is important in a Guide unit?' Other sessions looked at teaching the World Song, a history of Guiding timeline and an introduction to the MAGGA 8 Point programme. Although all Guiders in Malawi are expected to work from the 8 point programme the participants' knowledge of this topic was very limited. The afternoon session looked at First Aid. Topics looked at included slings, the recovery position, burns, choking, shock, fainting, and bleeding. The more active sessions on the recovery position and slings were especially well received.

Sunday 14th August was our final day of training. This day focused on the topic planning a camp. Training sessions included brainstorming a camp, planning a camp timeline, scenarios of possible problems on a camp and planning a 24 hour camp. The day was broken up with lots of songs and energisers and we finished the day by playing the famous animal game and by giving out friendship badges and singing day time taps.

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