

# UPLIFT GIRL CHILD

## VOCATIONAL TRAINING PROGRAMME - MALAWI

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When the whole world is caught up in pandemic, stand still and locked down.....In Malawi..... one of the poorest country.... On the 26<sup>th</sup> of October we began our 5<sup>th</sup> 'Uplift Girl Child' Training programme at Chikowa , one of the centers of Benga Parish .



Chikowa is situated in the mountain area of Benga Parish. The breeze on the mountains helps to bear the heat of the summer. This center has 12 sub centers. 21 girls from 6 centers participated in the program.

Our program began with the lighting of the Paschal candle symbolizing that Christ is our light.... A call from darkness to light...to recognize oneself, one's talents in the light of Christ. And live witnessing Christ....

The girls were trained in various methods of **Meditation** which they welcomed very much and were opened to enter in to this new experience.



Under the theme of **Self Development**, Self Awareness, Time Management, Conflict Management, Communication Skills and Social Awareness were conducted. Each topic were discussed through interesting activities.

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**Food preparation** is mainly conducted to encourage the girls in self employment and to introduce new food items. Along with drum sticks, Banana flower was introduced as a new vegetable. As it is the season of mango and banana, mango jam and babana sweets were introduced. A very simple butter cake was baked on store which turned out simply delicious.



**Dress Making** is considered not only for the benefit of self but also for self - employment. Though in the beginning they found it difficult to catch up with, gradually they became skillful women.



Summer is not a season for cultivation but with the hard work of the girls, they were able to put up a healthy home garden. They realized that this home garden can help them to eliminate hunger during summer season...



During the so called lockdown time we manage to have our follow up sessions with the former trainees. We realized that we need encourage them to save some amount of their earnings. Therefore in this program we introduced tills made out of plastic bottles. They were distributed on the second week of the program in order to encourage them to save a little from what their parents gave for their expenses.



This group was lucky to have an exposure program at the African National Park in order to value the nature and to meet people in different field of works.

An evaluation was done by the girls on the program and self.

On the 28<sup>th</sup> of November, the awarding ceremony began with Holy Mass celebrated by Rev. Fr. Stephen Ochieng MCSPA the Assistant Parish Priest of Benga Parish. After Mass Family members of the girls, Church members of Chikowa center, and special invitees graced the event. The program was conducted by the girls with group dances and songs. A review of the Training program was delivered by Sr. Matilda Lazarus. Lodha and Tiyamike shared their experiences of the one month program. Fr. Stephen, in his speech emphasized the value of women in today's society. The certificates were distributed by Rev Fr. Stephen. Also the girls received a Rosary, a needle and thread, Seeds to begin home garden, Till and a torch. Sr. Sudarshani Fernando delivered the vote of thanks. Later Sr. Girly Perera and Sr. Nishali Kurera led the guests along with girls to the Exhibition hall and to the home Garden.



Our sincere Thanks to God Almighty, Rev. Fathers & Brothers of MCSPA, Inter National Women Association of Malawi, Catechists of Chikowa Centre, The Chairperson and members of Chikowa Center, Friends from Spain,Canada,America,Germany, Australia and Sri Lanka and all members of PBN Family. God bless you all.

**Holy Family Sisters – Benga Parish – Malawi**