

WAIT UK AND UGANDA VISIT KENYA – a report by the UK team!

From 1st to 7th July 2013, four members of WAIT UK and six members of WAIT Uganda met in Nairobi to promote the message of WAIT, as well as start a brand new WAIT team in Kenya.



After having breakfast together at the Sasamoto Training Centre, the group of ten, plus five youth from Kenya, took a walk to a nearby shopping mall, where we purchased an all-important football and soft drinks. On our return to the Training Centre, we held our first meeting which was followed by the two WAIT teams giving a performance of the acts they know. Training began in earnest, right until dinner!

On the next morning, the WAIT rules were explained in detail. We were supposed to visit a school but that got changed to the following day, so we decided to pay a visit to the Nairobi Wildlife Park as a bonding exercise. After that, training continued until dinner time. Following dinner, Uncle Marshall presented, “A dozen reasons to remain abstinent” to the group.



Further training was held next morning before the group was split into two (due to necessity) in order to visit two different school. Basically, the UK team plus a few Kenyans went to Makini Secondary School, whilst the Ugandan team and a few Kenyans visited the Shree Samaj School. At both schools, the WAIT message was shared, and was followed by a performance, after which the school children were invited to sign up for WAIT if they wished. We felt this was a great way to start our school visits, as we were received very well. This also gave us great encouragement for the rest of the week. A reflection meeting was held after dinner.

We had planned a service project at Kilimani Primary School the following day. However, due to a teacher's strike and the absence of the head teacher and paints, we were unable to start the project. Instead, we met with a social activist, Dr. Dawda, and had a guided tour of a school, which has wonderful partners working alongside to develop it – a model school! During the time we were waiting for Dr. Dawda, the UK trainers met some Kenyan children who were students in the school. It started off with the UK team being on one side of the field and the Kenyan children on the other. As our Breakdance trainer, Vitas Le Bas, started to practice some of his moves we

noticed that they were attempting to copy him. We decided to go to them, once on the other side, Vitas began to teach one Kenyan child how to hand stand, while Narumi and Miwa sat with the other Kenyan children. This school is attended mostly by children from the slums, so if school isn't on they don't have other places to go to. For Narumi, this was the highlight of her trip in Kenya as we were able to put smiles on the faces of children whose lives were not easy due to their living circumstances.



After lunch that day, we visited the slum in Kibera, saw the community and computer centre run by UN Habitat for slum dwellers. Before leaving, the WAIT team performed four acts for the children and adults. Ugandan WAIT leader, Tadeo, explained what WAIT is all about (Kenyan WAIT member, Victor, translated in Swahili). There was even time for Vitas (UK break dance trainer) to teach a number of children how to break dance...

Next morning, in the spirit of service to others, we started a small service project at the Training Center – planting fruit trees – by clearing spaces and digging twelve holes along the driveway. Uncle Ashley and a few others went to purchase a variety of fruit trees (mango, avocado, guava, orange, lemon and lime) which would be planted later.

In the afternoon, we visited Karen South School which was quite local. After an enthusiastic response towards WAIT by teachers and pupils alike, an exciting basketball game between the school and WAIT members pursued (not to mention who won due to having two tall young men!)



Saturday, 6th July, saw the launch of WAIT Kenya at the Peace House in Nairobi. A "WAIT Convention" was held from 10am to 4pm. Several youth groups from all over Nairobi attended, each coming with 5-10 members. After a welcome and introduction to WAIT, every group was given the stage to explain who they were and to make a performance – they either sang, danced or acted out a drama! Following that, WAIT performed its variety of songs and dances. There were many exchanges over lunch (it was great to see all the WAIT members engaging in dialogue all over the room); many photographs were taken, and Vitas did some break dance training too. One of the most shocking things for the WAIT UK members (according to Miwa) was to hear teens and young adults around their own age, who dress well and reflect a similar image, share their stories

about their difficult lives in slums and how different their situations really are. At the end many contacts were shared and it was a blessed experience for everyone.

On our return to the Training Centre, we planted an assortment of fruit trees in the twelve holes we dug up previously before it got dark. Apart from the obvious benefit of growing fruit trees, members of the group learnt about agriculture – digging, using manure, planting, watering and caring for plants, e.g. the top layer of the hole is covered in straw to trap water that evaporates. Hopefully, this act of service now will lead to a successful harvest in a few years' time!

We couldn't forget to celebrate the WAIT UK member Narumi Le Bas' 18th birthday, which fell on that day, as well as WAIT Kenya member Victor's 20th birthday (which would fall two days later). And so at dinner we had a special cake and sang happy birthday to both members, with Vitas and the Kenyans smothering their faces in icing. Afterwards, there were some performances for the birthday people, and we all sang 'Down to the River to Pray' together.



After dinner, we held our final reflection meeting, with everyone sharing what the week meant for them. WAIT certificates were given out to all the new Kenyan members, as a memento of our special week together, but also a reminder of the all-important WAIT rules.

Everyone was invited to a Sunday Service at Peace House in Nairobi the following day. The group sang "Hero", and Uncles Marshall and Ashley shared a few words about WAIT development in Kenya, offering our gratitude for being given the opportunity to do this!



We returned to the Training Centre via the shopping mall, to conclude our time together in Nairobi. Then, in the early evening, it was time for the Ugandan team to depart for Kampala. That left the UK and Kenyan team members to organize a few games until the UK members had to take their leave – coach to the port of Mombasa to chill out for a couple of days, before taking the long flight back to London.

It was overall a really great experience for everyone, and we believe that the Kenyan WAIT team will succeed in keeping WAIT alive in Kenya. We would like to thank the Kenyan team, Ugandan team and IRFF UK/Uganda for helping to organize, run and support us on this trip.