



MALAWI OCTOBER 2022

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Introduction

HG (Homeopaths without Borders)

Homeopaten zonder Grenzen (HzG), Homeopaths without Borders the Netherlands

HG was founded in 1991 and has since then run multiple projects in Africa, South America, Eastern Europe, India and Central Asia. The mission of HG is to improve the general health of people by improving the access to healthcare and by educating local residents and basic healthcare workers. HG is a non-profit organization and is fully operating on a voluntary basis.

Malawi

Malawi is one of the less developed countries in the world. Especially women in Malawi face a lot of gender related problems. Child marriages and teenage pregnancies are common in Malawi and there is large gap in the development between men and women. Women and children are most likely to suffer from poverty and its impacts, such as violence, poor nutrition, and a lack of access to education and employment. The preterm birth rate is with 63% one of the highest in the world and many children live in poverty.

Mother and child project

The main goal of the HG Mother and Child project in Malawi is to improve the health of women and children in Malawi.



Goals of the project

In October 2022 HzG traveled to Malawi for a first exploratory mission. During this mission the EvaDemaya center was visited. This center is based in the Rumphi District in the Northern Region of Malawi. The goals of this mission was to investigate the local needs in this region and also to train local healthcare workers in workshops and on the job trainings (working alongside the local healthcare workers).

Main goal:

The main goal of this project is to improve the health of women and children in Malawi. To reach this goal HzG will follow a two-step approach.

The workshops will be closely monitored and evaluated. If possible we will develop a follow-up training to prepare women to start a small enterprise to provide basic homeopathic services to their community, allowing to generate income for themselves and their families.

A) HzG will train the local Malawian Homeopathy Assistants to treat the major health issues more effectively. As women and children are most vulnerable in Malawi, the training classes will focus on problems within this target group. The Train-the-Trainer classes for these health care workers will be offered by HzG experts in homeopathy and midwifery. The program will consist of:

- HzG experts teaching live homeopathy classes on major health issues in Malawi: health and pathology during pregnancy and birth, family planning, eye and ear infections, major skin diseases, trauma (physical and mental). These classes will include nutritional advise;
- HzG experts supervising training, consultations and advising on treatment plans, nutrition and basic health-care principles.

HzG experts will train the Homeopathic Assistants on content and on transferring the knowledge to Homeopathy Health Workers and Homeopathy First Aid Workers. In this way, HzG supports the Homeopathic Assistants to strengthen and expand their capacities, and the Homeopathy Health Workers and Homeopathy First Aid Workers will be trained in their own language, by the Homeopathic Assistants.

B) HzG will organize workshops for local women. In these workshops the women will be trained and will develop skills regarding the following topics:

- Homeopathic treatment of simple health issues at home: diarrhea, skin problems, fever, teeth problems. Women attending the workshop will receive a homeopathic remedies kit and will be able to use the remedies for themselves and their relatives.
- Basic health-care principles, nutrition, family planning, health and illness during pregnancy and birth.

Attending the workshop will empower these women at several levels: they are better informed; feel more independent and are able to improve their health and their families' wellbeing. Whilst improving the knowledge and skills of these women they have a better opportunity to improve their overall living conditions. By doing so, the women will enhance their further development and make more conscious decisions on family planning.

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Mission 2022– 9th to 22nd October 2022

Train the trainer / Training

During this mission we trained the homeopathic assistants and homeopathy health workers. In the next missions we will start to train the two local trainers and help them improve their training skills. Besides, together with them we will develop a training program per year.

On two occasions a one day training was given to local health caregivers. The topic of both trainings was homeopathic and naturopathic treatment of health and sickness during pregnancy and after birth. Anatomy, physiology and pathology were integrated in the training. The teaching method and information was adjusted to the level of the health care workers. During the training free lunch and drinks are provided and students are paid a transportation fee. The “train the trainer” approach has not been implemented yet as it does not seem adequate for the moment.

First training on 15 October 2022

The training was held from nine in the morning until four in the afternoon. 11 people, 2 women, 9 men, attended the training. The caregivers that attended were all homeopathic assistants that finalized the homeopathy training some years ago. The students all have a good level of speaking and understanding English. These homeopathic assistants work in local clinics or from their own home where they independently treat their patients in the own villages where they live.

Following subjects were part of the training:

1. Case taking
2. Repertorizing
3. Nausea in pregnancy
4. Sleeping problems and fatigue
5. Anemia
6. Heartburn
7. Hemorrhoids
8. Treatment of wounds
9. Nursing problems
10. Mastitis



After each subject a small “quiz” was done to check if the information was clear and also to make sure that the students would stay focused.

Second training on 18 October 2022

The training was held from nine in the morning until four in the afternoon. 16 people, 7 women, 9 men, attended the training. The participants were all homeopathy health workers. These two groups will be combined for future training days. They have a more basic level of knowledge when compared to the homeopath assistants. The level of understanding and speaking English is for most of them rather poor and that is why a translator was present to explain the information. These homeopathy health workers were trained to treat the more simple cases in an acute way. They work from their small homes treating people in their home village. The treatment they provide is often a barter deal where they would be given some eggs or rice for the treatment they give. They do not yet use a repertory. A repertory is a systematic way of categorizing symptoms and linking them to remedies. This is an important tool in practicing homeopathy. Especially when treating more complex cases.

Following subjects were part of the training:

1. Case taking
2. Nausea
3. Anemia
4. Hemorrhoids
5. Treatment of wounds
6. Nursing problems
7. Mastitis

After the theoretic part of the training a more practical part followed. In this practical part students were asked to prepare a performance in which they would explain a homeopathic remedy without being allowed to use the name of the remedy. This last part of the training was a huge success.

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Evaluation of the students

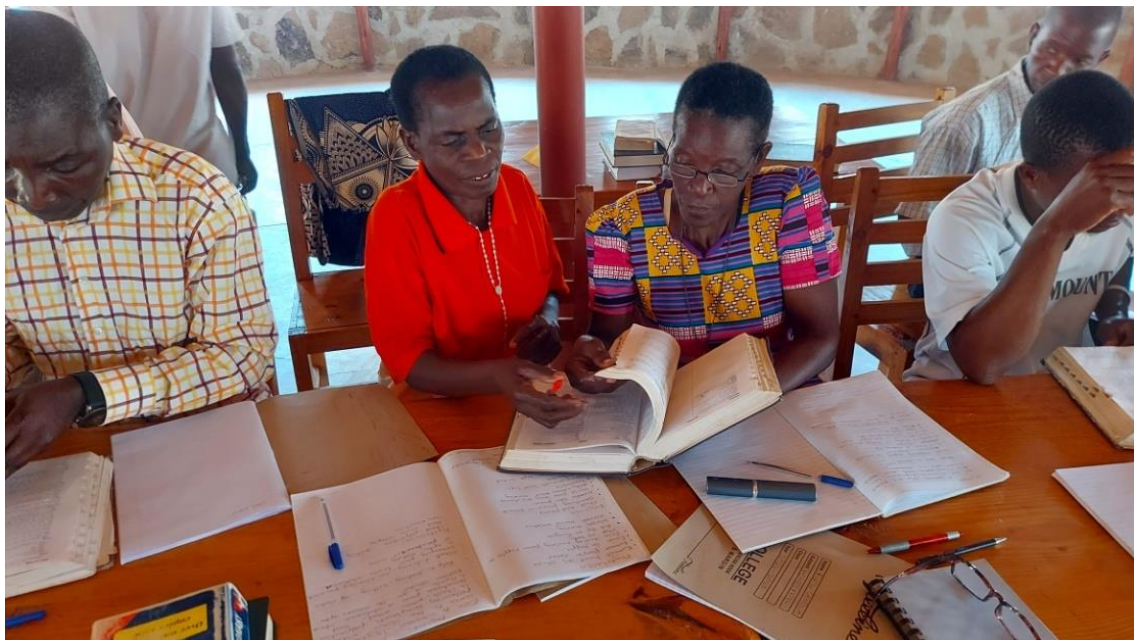
Day 1, homeopathic assistants

The students were very enthusiastic about the training. Their knowledge was good enough to absorb new information. They liked the approach of the teaching, with some information about the remedy and pictures of the remedies. They also appreciated the small and simple quizzes in between. It kept them active in the training.

They also liked to work on a case together in the afternoon and were eager to get the right remedy. They all participated actively in discussions, the quiz, the case taking and the repertorizing. From the group we did not hear any feedback on improvements.

We think it would be even better to have the presentation printed on paper and invite them to add the notes by themselves during the training. In that way they can take home the complete 'picture'. In that way we also do not depend on a beamer.

It is important to realize that there is no electricity available in the training center.



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Day 2, Homeopathy Health Workers

For the second training day, 16 people came to the training center. The scope of the training was adjusted to the group. The number of subjects was reduced and during the afternoon the remedies were presented in a form of drama.

For this group we prepared an evaluation form, which we can use in the future too. The evaluation form was filled in by 14 students as two had to leave earlier.

They all indicated that they understood the training; the level of training was good, they learned new things and that they expect to use the knowledge in their practice.

We asked them what the most interesting part of the training was. This was an open question. Some items were mentioned by several people (see number behind the item).

Answer	Nr of participants
* quiz	4
* work out remedy in drama	4
* remedies (eg ferrum, tabacum, hammalis - new)	4
* explaining well	3
* to share ideas from one to another	2
* working in groups	2
* short notes with well understanding per remedy	1
* topic nausea	1
* nursing problems	1
* good knowledge	1
* giving time to write	1
* sharing picture of the remedy	1
* the woman with the swollen breast (one of the drama parts)	1

We also asked the participants what topics they would like for next training. This was an open question. Some items were mentioned by several people.

Answer	Nr of participants
* skin eruptions	5
* repertorize	5
* malaria	3
* BP	3
* case taking	3
* corona virus	2

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* kidney and bladder	1
* material medica	1
* menstruation problems	1
* stitching and wounds	1
* remedies on nursing problems	1
* how to take the remedy	1
* diarrhea	1
* infertility	1

And the last question was what could be improved in the training. This was an open question. Some items were mentioned by several people.

Answer	Nr of participants
* study and learn more remedies	2
* medical dictionary	2
* training more often per year	1
* more diseases	1
* repeating earlier remedies	1
* all people should bring their books so we can learn how to use them	1
* more gestures and drama	1
* new knowledge	1
* hard working	1
* keep records	1
* practice after learning so we can't forget easily	1
* learn that the same remedy can treat different patients	1
* to have more books	1

The answers on the last question show the participants' eagerness to learn more about homeopathy, case taking and remedies. The answers also provide useful input to set up the next training sessions for the coming period.

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Outreach clinic

During one of the days an outreach clinic was organized. We visited the clinic in Mphangala. The homeopathic assistant working there, Andrea Mkandawire, is the most successful homeopathic assistant in the area.

He informed the people in the area that on the day we came, he and we would be taking cases during the day. This was a very impressive experience. When we arrived at the clinic lots of people were waiting in the garden. The registration of patients already started early in the morning. After a short guided tour Andrea, Kristel and Jolande had a space where we could take the cases. The Dutch homeopath were supported by a local homeopathic assistant/ homeopathic health worker. In this construction, the homeopathic assistant or health worker can help by translating and in the mean time they also learn from the cases and the approach.

Patients came with a variety of complaints, for example: cough (dry, rattling, acute, chronic); eye issues (inflammation, burning, stitching pain, lost of sight); malnutrition; dehydration; shock and nightmares after rape; back pain; high blood pressure; menstruation problems (prolonged, swollen ovaries, dark blood); sadness because of loss of family members; headache; abdominal pain combined with difficult stool; dizziness; eruption on skin or scalp. We treated around twenty patients per person this day.



'A warm blanket of great gratitude to homeopathy, that we can be here and help people with homeopathy!' (J.V.)

Working in the EvaDemaya homeopathic clinic

At the EvaDeMaya clinic patients from the region are treated in two small practices. In these two practices, three local homeopathic assistants treat patients on a daily basis. These local homeopathy assistants are trained in the past years and with this knowledge they are able to work individually. There is good cooperation between the homeopathic clinic and the conventional clinic. Patients are referred from one to the other when applicable or necessary.

During the COVID pandemic the local homeopaths did not have direct interaction with European homeopaths. For two years no trainings were given from outside the area, there was a shortage of basic bandages, treatment ointments and homeopathic remedies. During the consultations supervised by European homeopaths it was clear that the 'art' of case taking needed to be refreshed.

The HzG representatives worked for several days at the EvaDemaya clinic. The aim was to supervise the local homeopathic assistants and to help them improve their overall case taking. When working as a supervisor at the EvaDemaya clinic the HzG representatives focused on the following topics:

1. Gathering information
 - a. Start with good observation of the patient
 - b. Clinical examination of the patient
 - c. Asking open questions, use of intervals of silence
2. Taking the complete symptom
 - a. Look for the totality of the case
 - b. Look for certain peculiarities (strange, rare and peculiar symptoms or features)
 - c. Look for causation
 - d. Look for concomitants (symptoms appearing at the same time)
3. Repertorizing (finding symptoms in an systematic way)
 - a. How to work with the repertory (book with an overview of symptoms)
 - b. Finding the remedy that fits the case
4. Materia medica (elaborated description of homeopathic remedies)
 - a. Knowledge of the remedies
 - b. Using the Materia medica knowledge
 - c. Using Materia medica books if applicable

In the homeopathic clinic patients are treated for several physical and mental problems. Common problems in Malawi are:

1. Skin problems, like rashes, eczema, eruptions
2. Wounds from burns and/or traffic accidents
3. Cough, both dry and loose
4. Acute problems like fever, tonsillitis
5. Chronic problems like high blood pressure, diabetes, rheumatism
6. Anxiety
7. Depression after loss/ grief
8. Malnutrition

Working at the EvaDemaya Birth Centre

Despite the strong global focus on improving maternal health during past decades, there is still a long way to go to ensure equitable access to services and quality of care for pregnant women and girls in Malawi. The EvaDemaya centre has a small birth clinic where women from the region can come for pre- and postnatal consultation. The birth centre also has a basic delivery room where women can give birth. At the birth clinic there are two local nurses who work in shifts and one local physician who is ultimately responsible for the conventional clinic and birth clinic. At the birth clinic there is a lack of basic medical instruments, medication and diagnostic equipment.

One of the HzG representative is also a midwife and has helped out the birth clinic doing prenatal consultations and attending births.

When women come to the prenatal consultations following check-up are executed:

- Blood pressure
- Growth of fundus
- Position of bay
- Growth of baby
- Supplying medication and supplementation (malaria prophylaxis, iron)
- Define HIV status





Besides the medical check-ups women receive education about the pregnancy, how to care for themselves, their new-born and what to do when giving birth on their way to the hospital. In Malawi women are not allowed to give birth at home. This means women sometimes have to travel far to reach a birth clinic and giving birth during the travel is common. The regulations are that the women who deliver at home are supposed to pay 1000 kwacha (US\$ 1.50) to the chief (head of a village), and the chief give 500 kwacha (US\$ 0.75) to the hospital.

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Financial report

In October 2022 the first mission to Malawi took place. This first mission was originally planned for February 2022, but due to covid infections in the area the mission was postponed to October.

In the project plan two missions were planned for 2022. The costs were budgeted as follows:

Period	Step	Costs	Euro
2022 February	0	Prepare training and workshop, training material	250,-
First mission	1	Travel to Malawi (flight) 2x 1.250	2.500,-
	1	Visa costs 2 persons	100,-
	1	Overnight stay in Lilongwe 2 persons	150,-
	1	Local transport to and from airport to Centre 2x 200 2 persons	400,-
	1	Accommodation fee Eva Demaya Clinic for 2 persons	800,-
	1	Remedies, remedy kits, bandage, self-care products	500,-
2022 May	3	E-learning Malawi professionally developed and supported	500,-
2022 May		Set up campaign for fundraising "adopt a student": people who donate a fee for a woman participating in the homeopathy and health workshops or supporting a local health worker to be trained in homeopathy	500,-
2022 August-	3	Training HzG experts in the Netherlands	1.000,-
2022 October		Prepare training and workshop, training material	250,-
Second mission	4	Travel to Malawi (flight) 2x 1250	2.500,-
	5	Visa costs 2 persons	100,-
	5	Overnight stay in Lilongwe 2 persons	150,-
	5	Local transport from airport to Centre 2x 200 2 persons	400,-
	5	Accommodation fee Eva Demaya Clinic for 2 persons	1200,-
	5	Remedies, remedy kits, bandage, self-care products	500,-
Total costs 2022			11.800,-

The first mission took place. An e-learning has not been set up. This is not relevant for the students in Malawi as they do not have a laptop or tablet to work on. A few of them have a smart phone. The campaign for fundraising "adopt a student" and "support a woman participating in a workshop" is not yet set up. A plan for this is being elaborated. Also the budget to train HzG experts had not been used. For the second mission we have recruited a experienced homeopath and homeopathy teacher.

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The budget not used in 2022 will be transferred to 2023 and probably to 2024, as we agreed on going to this location twice a year for two years after which we will evaluate on how to continue to support the homeopathy health workers in Malawi.

Proposed budget versus actual realization for this first mission

Period	Budget in euro	Realization in euro
Prepare training and workshop, training material	250	-
Travel to Malawi (flight) 2x 1.250	2.500	3080
Transport NL		53
Travel test		160
Visa costs 2 persons	100	112
Overnight stay in Lilongwe 2 persons	150	190
Local transport to and from airport 2x 200 2 persons	400	420
Accommodation fee Eva Demaya Centre for 2 persons	800	880
Remedies, remedy kits, bandage, self-care products	500	346
Daily allowance for voluntary work		750
Total costs mission October2022	4700	5991

Funding of the project is done by a yearly contribution from HzG of 2.500 euro, a yearly contribution from Familiefonds Wiarda-Baas of 2.000 euro, an overall funding for the activities in Malawi from Stichting Zorg voor Malawi of 9.000 euro and many personal donations from involved colleagues and friends based on posts on Instagram and Facebook, the newsletters from HzG.

Summary and next steps

Summary of the exploratory mission to Malawi in 2022

The main goal of the Mother and child project is to improve the health situation of women and children in Malawi. In this first exploratory mission HzG investigated the steps to take to reach the main goal of the project. At the EvaDemaya Centre and at the outreach clinics the HzG representatives treated a wide variety of cases like cough and rash to more complicated cases, with emotional traumas, birth complications and malnutrition. Working with and supervising the local homeopathic assistants provided a good insight in the main problems the people from North Malawi are facing.

After two years of no trainings during the COVID pandemic the training days held by HzG were well received. The students are eager to learn and are actively involved in the classes. With the information they received they will be able to support and help the women and baby's in their own villages during pregnancy and after birth related problems.

Next steps

It is important to organize training on a regular basis (twice a year). Making sure there is continuity in the training days will help to extend the knowledge of the local homeopaths and help them to embed the information they learn during the training days. HzG has the intention to organize a mission to Malawi twice a year. During each mission we will organize training days for the existing local homeopathic groups. There will be a variety of subjects covered during the trainings.

1. Second Mission to Malawi is planned for February 2023.

Two representatives of HzG will go to Malawi for two and a half weeks. During this second mission following activities will be organized:

- Bring homeopathic remedies, ointments, tinctures and bandages
- Training program on following topics:
 - a. Case taking, use of repertory
 - b. Materia medica
 - c. Anatomy, physiology and pathology, homeopathic and naturopathic approach for diarrhea, cholera and malaria
- Bring mosquito nets

- Investigate the possibility of a workshop for local women about domestic violence
- Investigate possibilities to set up workshops for young mothers with the doctor and midwife on the EvaDemaya Centre
- Organize outreach clinics
- Work with and supervise local homeopathic assistants at the EvaDemaya clinic

2. Third Mission to Malawi is planned for September 2023

After the second mission the content of the third mission will be defined.

3. Next steps along with the missions

We will think about possibilities to find specific sponsoring for the project in Malawi e.g. by creating small profiles about the homeopathy health workers and put these online.

The project is important in itself, it is also a good way to promote HzG. A presentation will be composed, which will be used to promote HzG and the Malawi Mother and Child project at homeopathic schools and the professional association of homeopaths in the Netherlands. We will also look for other opportunities to promote the project and the foundation.

The situation of the EvaDemaya Centre is changing. The management of the centre will be handed over to a local MD. This MD is a local doctor, highly internationally educated. He has expressed his positive ideas on homeopathy. We will see in the coming period how the cooperation will be. It might be an opportunity to create a broader homeopathic base in Malawi.

The homeopathic health workers asked for repertory books. Although for some of them the language will be a problem, some others will be able to profit from learning to use the repertory. We will investigate possibilities to find repertories (Synthesis version 7 or 8) for the homeopathy health workers.

After a period of three years in total, an overall evaluation will be done to see how successful the project is and how we will continue to support the people in Malawi.

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