

BBC Radio 4 Appeal Easter Sunday, March 23, 2008

Presenter: Betty Boothroyd

When I was a young girl I was a Brownie and remember those days with pleasure. I would have loved to become a Girl Guide but the War came along and interrupted my plans. If I'd been able to join I would have practised my compass, sewing and laundry skills to earn those special badges that marked success.

Times have changed. Today, Girl Guides enjoy fun, friendship and challenge while developing life and leadership skills. They are involved in big global issues, such as the environment – peace projects – how to take care of their health and avoid smoking and AIDS.

Knowing that being a Brownie or a Girl Guide can benefit the lives of young girls, I support The World Association of Girl Guides and Girl Scouts.

WAGGGS – as it is known – WAGGGS - is the umbrella organisation for 144 Guiding Associations around the world – from Australia to Zimbabwe.

Girl Guides, such as 12 year-old Amelia in Nairobi, learn important life skills through games and helping their community with hands-on projects, as well as learning about how to protect herself from health risks such as HIV infection.

In Kenya and many other areas of the world, young women are most vulnerable to HIV infection. In response to this challenge – and with support from the United Nations – WAGGGS have produced a training toolkit to increase awareness of the virus and help reduce rates of infection among young people.

The World Association is also committed to many other life changing programmes to help girls and young women. But to carry on they need your help.

A gift of £10 will enable two young women to have the HIV and AIDS tool kit to teach others.

A gift of £20 will pay for a girl to attend a life skills camp.

And £100 will pay for a young person at a week-long leadership workshop.

Guiding really does change lives and help make the world a better place.

Please give now by calling 0800 404 8144. That's 0800 404 8144.

Or you can write a cheque to WAGGGS and send it to Freepost BBC Radio 4 Appeal. That's Freepost Radio 4 Appeal. Please mark the back of your envelope WAGGGS. And thank you.