



Community Hub for Growth



Connect, Grow, Impact!

Diversity: Making Girl Guiding Accessible to All

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If we're growing,
we're always going
to be out of our
comfort zone
- John Maxwell



Introductions



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**A Guide for MOs:
Increasing the diversity of girls and
volunteers by connecting with diverse
communities and groups**



The Power of Seven



A simple 7-step process to help you address diversity in your MO:

1. Existing diversity amongst your girls and volunteers
2. The inherent link between girl and volunteer diversity
3. Minority group under-representation
4. Target group choice
5. The power of partnerships
6. The importance of monitoring
7. Post 'recruitment' inclusivity to drive further diversity

You may well need to start at the end!



1. Existing Diversity Amongst Your Girls/Volunteers



Begin by assessing the diversity that already exists amongst your current girls

- Ethnicity, race, skin colour
- Religious groups (including non religious)
- Age (particularly for volunteers)
- Sexual orientation and gender identity
- Disabilities (both physical and mental)
- Nationality (including 2nd, 3rd, 4th generations)
- Languages spoken (including 2nd+ languages)
- Educational background
- Socio-economic status
- Parental/family set-ups (single parent families, same-sex parents etc)
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Which do you have actual data on?

Which can you take an (educated) guess at?

Which do you have no idea about?



2. The Inherent Link Between Girl and Volunteer Diversity



The diversity (or lack thereof) of your volunteers directly impacts the diversity of your girls and the diversity (or lack thereof) of your girls directly impacts the diversity of your volunteers.

It's human nature to like and to want to feel part of groups of people that 'feel like me'. It is a basic instinct in our brain, usually unconscious but very hard-wired, that 'people like me' feel safest. We gel with them more quickly, we find them easier to get along with and we have lots in common.

Girls want to see other girls in a troupe that look, feel and behave like them. The same applies to volunteers. Volunteers are also role models to the girls (whether both the girls and the volunteers are conscious of this or not) so the girls also want to see volunteers that look, feel and behave like them (or how they'd like to be).

Understanding this inherent link is key – when diversifying your MO you must tackle girls and volunteers *together*.



3. Minority Group Underrepresentation



Having considered the diversity that already exists amongst your girls and volunteers, it is now time to think about which minority groups are present in your country/region/society, but which are *not* represented (or not represented proportionally) in your MO/troupe.

Your country's equivalent to the UK's Office of National Statistics can be a useful place to start, particularly census information. Local councils and similar may also hold such information.

Example: You've been able to find out the percentage mix of religions represented in your country. Comparing this to the information you have on the religious mix amongst your girls and volunteers you notice that there is a particular religion that represents over 20% of your country yet less than 3% of your girls/volunteers



4. Target Group Choice



The assessment of which groups are not represented, or not proportionately represented, in your MO will throw up many different answers. Some will be statistically insignificant, others will be more glaring and many will simply confirm what you already knew.

Choosing two or three key diverse groups that you want to target is far better than trying to tackle all your 'gaps' at once. Only you can assess which are the right ones to go for but some factors to consider when making your choice could include:

- Which minority groups do you already have represented to some degree but would like to increase the percentage of? Often trying to add more, rather than start from scratch, can be easier.
- Which underrepresented groups do you or someone in your MO's leadership team already have links with or good knowledge of?
- Is there any overlap between any of the underrepresented groups as to *why* you think they've not engaged in girl guiding? Sometimes by tackling one underlying cause you can appeal to several different groups.



5. The Power of Partnerships



Once you've decide on the underrepresented groups or communities that you want to start connecting with, consider partnering with existing organisations that represent that group as a 'route in'.

This brings three benefits:

1. They will already have deep insights in to the group/community, so use this pool of knowledge to your advantage.
2. They are likely already to be trusted by people from that group/community, so again use this to your advantage.
3. They may be able to help you understand why girls from that group/community are *not* already engaging with your MO, for example the venue of troupe meetings, the type of activities undertaken etc..

An example from the corporate world: A large UK law firm had very few black and ethnic-minority lawyers or partners (despite non-white people making up 13% of the UK population and 21% of law school graduates). They partnered with the Association of Black Solicitors to increase their hiring of lawyers from this minority group.



6. The Importance of Monitoring



Monitoring the diversity of your girls and volunteers is really important so you can make an accurate assessment of the success (or otherwise) of your efforts to reach new groups.

Be sure to comply with local data protection and privacy legislation when considering which monitoring data to collect as well as where and how it should be stored, assessed and viewed.

Monitoring and statistical assessment of your data can help not only in assessing 'current state' of the diversity (or lack of it) of your girls and volunteers but it can also help you in the long term to assess where in your 'chain' you may be having problems:

- Do you have success in attracting a certain underrepresented group but then they don't stay very long?
- Do you have problems attracting girls but not volunteers from a particular group, or visa versa?
- What other data do you collect that you could cross-reference with your diversity data (for example satisfaction scores)?



7. Post 'Recruitment' Inclusivity to Drive Further Diversity



Attracting underrepresented girls and volunteers is only half of the battle – retaining them will entirely depend on how inclusive a MO/troupe is and how adaptable it is to new people, with potentially different needs and requirements.

Girls or volunteers that feel excluded (consciously or unconsciously) will quickly leave and usually have a negative ripple effect back in their community, hindering future attraction of people from that community. Even some seemingly simple things can have a big impact such as what uniform requirements are there, what language is used, what physical activities are undertaken, what fees model do you have and even what's the wording of your Promise.

An example: You identified that you had a lack of Jewish girls and volunteers in your MO. You worked with a Jewish youth organisation to attract more. However your trekking/camping trips were still always held over a weekend, from Friday night to Sunday morning meaning that no orthodox Jewish girls or volunteers could participate because of their Sabbath (sundown on Friday to sundown on Saturday).



Guiding and the Traveller Community





Overview

- Our diversity project aimed to identify groups of young people who could benefit from better access to guiding
- By comparing the local population alongside services and groups that offered support we were able to identify the most underrepresented groups



Overview

- The Traveller Community was identified as a key target group
- Girls and young women are often socially isolated due to the cultural traditions of the Community
- Girlguiding approached the Community through existing contacts within the local Council





How did we engage?



- We worked directly with a Council Traveller Liaison Officer
- Face to face meetings were held with members of the Community
- Guiding opportunities were opened up to female Travellers to experience free of charge
- Local Children's Services were also able to 'refer' young people to guiding





What difficulties did we encounter?



- Time - especially related to preliminary work
- Lack of central/external funding for work with this group
- Gaining trust within the Community itself
- Communication and literacy
- Promoting Guiding for girls aged 10+



What worked well?

- Being able to promote a safe single-sex environment
- Working in partnership with organisations already trusted by the Traveller community
- Open mindedness of existing volunteers within GirlGuiding
- Being able to include adult members of the Traveller Community in volunteer roles



What was the outcome?

- 19 girls aged between 6-15 (out of a potential group of 29) attended at least one guiding meeting, 11 of these continued to become members for at least 12 months, with some transferring to other Units when the family group moved on
- No girl aged 14+ remained a member - they all left when they finished education
- Two adult volunteers continue to be involved with guiding after three years and Girlguiding's reputation amongst the Traveller Community has been greatly improved



Top tips

- Small scale initiatives with short-term, clear-cut goals, particularly those focused on practical issues, tend to work best with this group.
- Top down support is required within organisations in order to promote a consistent response
- The impact that decades of discrimination has had on the Traveller Community's willingness to engage should not be underestimated.
- The personalities of those working with the Traveller Community are often key to engagement; respect plays a large role in the success of a project.

