



## Oregon State University

### BOTSWANA GLOBAL HEALTH INITIATIVE

Summer 2022 | Maunatlala, Botswana

### An Update from Isabel Griffin

Hi! My name is Isabel and I will be a senior this fall studying bioengineering. When I'm in Corvallis, I work for OSU's Office of Admission giving campus tours to prospective students. I also work in the Polymer Science and Rheology lab under Dr. Skip Rochefort in our Menstrual Health and Hygiene group. There, we run tests on menstrual products on the market and create prototypes of pads with the goal of creating an affordable and sustainable pad for underprivileged communities. In collaboration with the Botswana Global Health Initiative Program our lab hopes to better understand the needs of the women here in Maunatlala to better inform our research back home.

I have made many amazing memories during my time here in Maunatlala from stargazing with friends to walking to the local store for candy. I also had the opportunity to take a tour of the Lotsane Dam water treatment center. The dam supplies drinking water to 22 villages in the Tswapong area and was finished in 2012. It was really fun to learn about the treatment process and be able to see lots of the concepts that I have learned in school.

One of my favorite parts of my experience here in Maunatlala has been hanging out with all the primary kids after school. Many of them come to the Maunatlala Community Library for an after school program and to play on the playground. It's been so fun getting to know the kids and often times they were the most open and informative members of the community.

Although we still have a few days left here in Botswana, I can confidently say this experience has changed my perspective not only on the world but also on myself. I have grown so much personally, academically and have been kindly humbled by this experience.

### Our final days in Maunatlala

Time has really flown by! Our team has less than a week before we say goodbye to the village of Maunatlala and make our way back to Gaborone and begin our journey home. Each project is busy as we all wrap up our work for the time being, and start to make plans for our next visit. Our team is so thankful to have been given the opportunity to see a part of the world that is rarely seen by American students. This trip has taught us all so much about collaboration, flexibility, and the importance of empathy when working with cultures so different from our own. We will be ending our stay with all the people who made our work possible by hosting a braai (br-eye) dinner at our guest house on Thursday evening, before leaving for Gaborone early Friday. All of the community members and stakeholders who have been crucial in launching our programs and collecting data are invited to come share a meal with us and OT will be our DJ for the night! We look forward to celebrating the wonderful relationships we have built and the work we are beginning to accomplish again after a long intermission from Covid. Thank you so much to all the people who helped to bring our students here, and have encouraged us every step of the way. We love you!

**P.S... The 6th and final edition of this year's newsletter will be posted next week with a recap of our trip!**



# Traditional Botswana Cuisine

## Seswaa or "Pounded Meat"

Recipe from Dorcas Mababa

Seswaa is a traditional dish of Botswana that is a type of shredded beef. It is typically served with a starchy side such as Papa ("pop") or samp.

### Ingredients

2 pounds of beef chuck  
6-8 cups of water  
Salt and pepper to taste  
Any seasonings of your choice

### How to prepare this dish:

Cut beef chuck into small pieces and set aside. Add water to a large pot and bring to a boil. Once boiling, add in beef and salt and pepper to taste. Boil beef for around 30 minutes or until meat becomes tender, then drain water. Pound (or shred) the beef and add seasonings of your choice.

## Papa ("Pop")

Recipe from Dorcas Mababa

Papa is another dish native to Botswana, and very similar to other dishes such as "Fufu". It's made from maize meal and has a bouncy consistency

### Ingredients

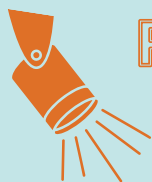
Equal parts water and maize meal  
Salt to taste

### How to prepare this dish:

Bring water to boil in a large pot. Once boiling, slowly stir in maize meal powder and salt until mixture stiffens and becomes dough-like. Cook on low heat for 10 minutes and serve



SRH and GBV team with MHH. From left to right: Kate Bandettini, Peter Jefferson, Grace Petrina, Willa Bixby, Divya Reddi, Marky Kowal, and Rachael Schmidt



## PROJECT SPOTLIGHT

### Sexual Reproductive Health & Gender-based Violence

By Rachael Schmidt, GBV undergraduate

The Sexual and Reproductive Health project aims to educate adolescents and their caregivers on the development of male and female bodies during puberty, the processes of menstruation, conception, and pregnancy, as well as good hygiene practices. The curriculum involves both adolescents and their caregivers separately and then

has a final session including both parent and child to teach and encourage healthy and frequent communication between them. Additional topics include sexually transmitted diseases, safe sex practices, peer pressure, and online safety. The curriculum includes guided activities in all sessions helping to build knowledge and skills on hygiene practices, accurate health information, and dispelling common myths about sexual health.

The Gender-based Violence program is a curriculum for adolescents and caregivers separately from each other in a guided workbook. The content includes the difference between sex and gender, gender norms, power, gender-based violence, communication styles, and building healthy relationships. The workbook encourages critical thinking about common gender norms and myths, builds refusal and assertive communication skills, and breaks down the different types of GBV. Students have group and individual activities to complete in the workbooks that allow them to practice new skills and serves as a resource guide for information on sex and gender.

**SRH team:** Divya Reddi (Leader), Grace Petrina, and Willa Bixby **GBV team:** Marky Kowal (Leader) and Rachael Schmidt