



**PROJECT  
GAMBIA**

# Spring Update 2011



Project Gambia is now amazingly in its 6th year! Following its early beginnings, supporting the TARUD Pre School in Gunjur, the project has progressed beyond all expectations. The school continues to educate 230 children aged 3 to 7 years of age, accommodated in six classrooms, a hall, a staffroom, toilet block, play area and playground. However, there is now the addition of a wonderful garden tended to by the staff and children. They grow tomatoes, beans, onions, radishes and carrots, which are harvested and used for the children's meals.



A water tower has also been added, to pump water from the well to a tap. This means that the children no longer need to pull water from the well and risk falling in, as some have done in the past in the village. There is also a flower garden that honours the memory of Fatou Darboe one of our most outstanding teachers who tragically died in childbirth last year.

But that is only the beginning of the story. In 2006 four other schools in the town joined us for a conference to discuss Pre School Education. This was the first time that they had all met together and they collectively decided to create the first Pre School curriculum in the country as none existed. For two years they worked tirelessly on drafting a curriculum that reflected the Gambian culture and traditions and prepared children for a life in Africa. This was completed and then the schools began to trial sections. At this point it was clear that without resources their

work could not be implemented. So, over the past two years shipments of resources have been sent out and the final load arrived in April of this year.

A further school has now joined the group making six in total. This means that these schools (some of whom five years ago had only a blackboard and chalk and not even seats to sit on) will be fully resourced to deliver the curriculum.

Three annual training days have followed, which focussed on lesson planning and using resources. Such is the quality of the curriculum, that the Government has shown an interest in adopting it countrywide.

Classrooms which were once untidy and very dusty, are now being kept clean and have new shelving and storage to ensure the resources are cared for. Perhaps one of the most pleasing aspects of the work it to see six schools cooperating and supporting each other so well and sharing expertise.

However, this is not the end of the project, far from it! If this wonderful work is to continue and grow, funding will need to continue to ensure salaries are paid and buildings maintained. Sadly all over the Gambia empty buildings stand idle, where funding was only short term from well intended groups who forgot that this is a life long commitment.

I will continue funding until I no longer earn a salary, but I desperately need your continued support. So to all those who have helped in the past a huge thank you and to all those who would like to help make lives better in the Gambia in the future, please contact us at the address below.

To see more of the work we have done so far, visit our website at [www.cornertolearn.co.uk](http://www.cornertolearn.co.uk) or visit our facebook page at Red Robin Books.

Warm wishes

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