



## WHAT A YEAR WE HAVE ALL BEEN THROUGH!

All new projects, major fundraising activities, talks to schools, organisations and our annual container have all been put on hold. The storeroom in the UK is full to bursting!! - see Paul's article on page 2

**A special thank you to everyone** who supports the charity by monthly standing order or has donated cash or items for sale this year. You have kept us going through these difficult times and also helped us to continue with essential repairs to school buildings and wells in The Gambia, arranged through trusted long-term local key facilitators - Kebba and Ousman - and paid through the charity in the UK.

Our first **NEW SCHOOL PROJECT** since Loumen (Feb 2013).

The Gambian Government has brought to our attention the plight of a school further up-country than anything we have done previously. We are now very pleased to announce that this coming winter, with the help of Carolyn Williams' legacy,

we will replace the existing "school" at **Njalal Samba** with a classroom block and toilets. We will also provide a solar-powered borehole well, our deepest yet at 78m. Indeed, at the time of writing (June 2021), work on the borehole has already started - an essential first step as we cannot build the school without water!!

Regular updates will be posted on our social media pages.



## TEAMWORK

We take this opportunity to mention some of our notable contributions, so far, to children's education in The Gambia, none of which would have been achieved without you, our amazing supporters:-

- 5 schools, now catering for approximately 1200 pupils per year
- 14 school libraries, with **2 more planned** for our next visit
- 3 solar powered bore holes
- 8 hand pump wells
- 12 teachers for qualification through college
- 15 containers of school materials.

**Covid-19** Like many under-developed countries, exact statistics are difficult to obtain. Published statistics are low. Three factors in their favour are - 77% of the population are under 25, they live predominantly outdoors and the hot dry weather. However, we have been told that many people have had very bad "colds". The biggest impact economically is the lack of tourists, as 25% of the annual national income comes from visitors.

Notable achievements and headline plans are only part of the picture. There is even more going on behind the scenes. Please move on to page 2 for Paul's special report on some of our UK activities.

## Paul says:-

“Despite 2020 being the strangest of years our marvellous supporters continued to astound us with their generosity and donations. So much so that our storeroom is now full to bursting point!



Our long term supporters at Greenhill Primary in Bramley, All Saints Primary in Halifax, Woodside Academy, Thackley Primary and St Stephens Primary (all Bradford) and Burley Oaks Primary, came up with their now annual donation.



We also received what we hope will become regular donations from Northowram Primary and Bowling Green Academy in Halifax, Derby High School, Cononley Primary and Tyersal Primary.



Special mention must go to the Nelson Family from Newcastle. They never cease to amaze us with their unbelievable annual donation; this year we had to borrow a long wheel base Transit van to get it all in! Thanks to their fantastic organising ability we came back with a van full of equipment from the Wallbottle Campus Technical College and Milecastle Primary School together with the contents of their neighbour's garage which they had managed to fill with banana boxes full of books, toys and sporting equipment.

One of the consequences of the lockdown was that a number of workplaces shut down as many of us started to work from home. This gave us the opportunity to offer our services to collect unwanted office equipment. As a result we have raised a significant amount of money and have some fabulous computer equipment, cabinets and stationery to be given a new lease of life in The Gambia.

As the nation was at home for protracted periods during 2020 many of us carried out “lockdown clear outs” which gave us a great new opportunity for donations of items we could either eventually take over to The Gambia, or sell to raise much needed funds. Using social media we managed to make contact with a number of new supporters who made marvellous donations throughout the year. Hopefully they'll remember us next time they have a tidy up of their teenagers' bedrooms!



We have to thank Steven Neimantas for repeatedly sourcing a van for us, driving hundreds of miles and most importantly putting in so many days throughout the year humping countless desks, chairs, cabinets, boxes and computers into the van and then into our storeroom in Low Moor”.



Sincere apologies to those we've missed. Our grateful thanks go to one and all.

***We couldn't do it without you.***

**Finally,** Paul was keen to include this pic - one of the two figures was donated as a teaching aid, the other is our fellow trustee Steve - but which is which? Answers on a donation, please!

To see how you can help, or to look for updates, please check our website and social media, or contact the trustees:-

Christine Brown, Linda Gunn, Hilary Lawther, Steve Lawther, Paul Neimantas, David Oldfield