

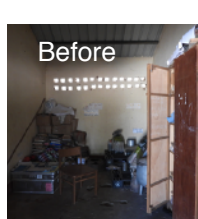
Plan B!

This year we were faced with a most unusual situation which, thankfully, we were able to sort out very quickly using the experience and expertise, local knowledge, contacts and reputation built up by Hilary and Steve whilst living in The Gambia for several months each year for the last 20+ years. Truly a "Win - Win" as you'll see from Steve's report:-

"PLAN B. - GO AHEAD"

In last year's newsletter we mentioned Rumba school which had captured David Wright's enthusiasm for helping. David spent last summer raising £10,000 for the school's renovation. BUT, when we arrived in November we found a Belgian charity had carried out all the improvements at Rumba over the summer!

One phone call to the Education Director in Region 3 (north bank) and we were introduced to **CONTEH KUNDA** Lower Basic - a school in even greater need of assistance! A bad storm in 2019 had badly damaged the roof on one of only three classrooms, Nursery pupils were being taught by rote, sat on the floor outside with a blackboard on the end of the building, and the whole school was in need of improvement.



Thanks to David's efforts we replaced and strengthened the damaged roof, tiled the three classrooms, office, staff room and verandah AND built a new classroom for the nursery children. All completed between November and February when the Jolly Boys (David, George and Trustee Paul) arrived to paint the whole school on their annual visit.

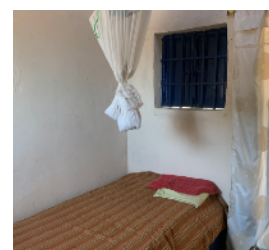
*** David's amazing fundraising continues as the teachers have requested living quarters at the school and a water supply for the school garden. ***

At the same time as the Conteh Kunda project we commenced work at **KERR NDONGO** Lower Basic School, located less than 10 kilometres away in the same area. We had been contacted by their new headteacher, Mr Jaw, who had been posted there from Loumen, one of the schools we had previously built. When asked which of his many "constraints" should be tackled first he replied "quarters for my guys", as three teachers were sleeping on the floor in one of the offices.



Longtime supporters Anne and Steve Worsman held two very successful fundraising events at Silsden Town Hall last year (and will this year - see page 2) and so the **"SILSDEN QUARTERS"**

were built to accommodate the headmaster and four of his staff.



The balance of Carolyn Williams legacy (grateful thanks to Simon and Nick Gill for their permission), plus a generous donation from the Hampshire family in Canada, allowed us to carry out roof repairs, tile all six classrooms and the offices, paint the whole school inside and renovate the kitchen. We are hoping to provide them with a library in 2025 by converting an unused structure in the grounds. Thank you to Kebba for his project management and negotiations on materials.



Our last project of the season was at **TUJERING** Upper and Senior, a huge school with 1800 pupils. When visiting with Joan Ramsden and Angela Wood, where we delivered several boxes of donated books, we discovered they had nowhere to display them! We did, however, find one unused old classroom where we were able to repair louvred windows, add electrical sockets, provide fans, voile dust curtains and shelving. We decorated, assembled the shelving and displayed the books with help from Anne and Pauline Marshall who were with us for a couple of weeks.



In amongst these “projects” we managed to demolish and rebuild the kitchen at **Jamwelly**, to repair the storm-damaged walls and roof and complying with the latest World Food Programme (WFP) storage requirements. We also raised the roof by three blocks, thus increasing the height of the teachers quarters at **Njalal Samba**, to better cope with the much higher temperatures now experienced inland. With much appreciated thanks to all who helped make this another very successful season”

Steve.

The Gambian Schools Trust

www.gambianschools.org

gambian.schools@gmail.com <01274 585431



Charity no. 1093083

When reading about the headline projects it's just too easy to forget all the other equally essential work going on “under the radar”. All of this will continue to help the children, now and well into the future, in The Gambia where GST is very well respected. Hopefully this recent flier will remind us: — —

Special thanks to Anne and Steve Worsman for arranging two events at Silsden Town Hall (see silsden.live):-

31 May - “Silsden’s Big Indoor Garden Party”.

2 Aug - “The Haleys” in concert.

*** These were fantastic last year and were soon sold out. Enquire soon to avoid disappointment ***

Other events in 2025 include:-

30 Aug - Garden Party at Briarfield Ave. Idle.

20 Sept - stall at Saltaire Festival churchyard.

October (date to be finalised) - Curry night.

October (date to be finalised)- container loading

*** Volunteers will be needed ***

Since we began in 2001, we are proud to have helped establish, significantly expand and improve the system of education for young children in The Gambia, in poor, often remote, areas. We have created, provided or facilitated

- 6 Schools serving 1000+ pupils
- 18 Libraries, all regularly restocked
- 8 Hand-pump and 4 Solar powered wells, all providing year round clean water
- Sustainable school and community gardens in previously unviable areas
- 3 fully equipped Computer rooms at larger Upper schools
- Ongoing repairs and maintenance
- 12 teachers sponsored through college
- Shared expertise and best practice with other schools
- 200+ schools supplied with educational materials, etc
- Visits by school parties, students and others with interests similar to those of GST
- and MUCH, MUCH, more



.... All of this thanks to the tireless efforts and generosity of our founders, our helpers, our amazing sponsors and, of course, the Gambian people themselves, whose genuine welcome and appreciation of our work will ensure a long lasting legacy

To everyone who has helped in any way with time, money, expertise, muscle power, encouragement, organising, etc, etc - you know who you are and we couldn't do it without you all

A VERY BIG THANK YOU

From us all at

The Gambian Schools Trust

You'll find info on our schools, libraries, activities etc on our website and lots of topical stuff here -



Please have a look.

Or, ask a trustee:-

Christine Brown, Linda Gunn, Hilary Lawther MBE (UK 07932 650644), Steve Lawther MBE (UK 07946 400475), Paul Neimantas (UK 07510 224894), David Oldfield (UK 07570 505913)