



UK Registered Charity 1110998

Gambia Education and Teaching Support NEWSLETTER

Issue 14 June 2011

Time for Reflection

Don't forget our AGM:
Sat 3rd September
12pm
@ Nash Community Hall
Newport, NP18 2BZ

As the academic year draws to an end, we reflect on the successes, and difficulties, of the past year in the Gambia

Letter from the Chair

Welcome to the latest GETS Newsletter which will be the last one of this academic year.

We have some short articles written by students at Sunrise, explaining how GETS funding has changed the Centre.

Friday 20th May saw the graduation of 23 of our Skills students and we wish them every success as they leave the Centre and move on to the next phase of their lives.

Sponsors of individual students will be receiving end of year accounts for their students in the next few weeks and we thank them for their continued support.

We do have a story about a sponsored student whose sponsorship wasn't as successful as it might have been, despite the best attempts of the sponsors. A sad reminder that not everyone makes the most of the opportunities that GETS sponsorship gives them.

Finally, the Executive Committee welcome 2 new trustees and we are delighted that Tony Nelson, Sunrise Project Director and Ian Ward- Dutton, have agreed to join us as co-opted trustees until our AGM in September. Julie Limbrick, our Secretary, has reluctantly decided to step down at the next AGM. She has been with GETS since its inception and she will be sadly missed. We all wish her and Bryn, the very best for the future.

Thank you all for your generous support this year. Please do try to attend the AGM when we will give our plans for the future of GETS and the further development of Sunrise.

Sheila



**Nursery day trip to Abuko Nature Reserve on Commonwealth day
March 2011**

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Sponsorship—a risk worth taking

“We met Omar while on holiday in The Gambia. Unlike many other Gambians we had met, Omar did not ask us for money, he helped us as a guide to see some of the real Gambia. He said that he was keen to find a way of earning more money by finding a job, but had left school before taking his year 9 exams because his family could not pay.

Sponsoring a child can be an extremely rewarding and enriching experience for both the child and the sponsor - but on the odd occasion, despite the best efforts of GETS and the sponsor, things do not always work out as we would like. Please see our website for details of the current successful sponsors. <http://www.getsuk.org/Sponsorship.htm>

He did not ask for sponsorship, but we said that we would try to help, and spent a day doing some research visiting GETS, the university and MDI. We were keen to focus on a route to a job. Omar started well and completed a year back at school (year 9). We funded a bike for him as the school was some distance from where he was living. His grades were average, but his attendance was good. At the end of the year at school Omar suggested that he do a carpentry course. Helen also provided feedback from her contacts that it was generally viewed as a useful economic skill. The course was at the main GTTI site. As he had the bike, we asked him to cycle to the GTTI building in Banjul. The time it was taking him to travel was unusually long, and it became apparent that the bike was not working. Although he seemed to want travel money, we paid for the bike to be fixed and Omar completed the first term with good attendance.

He was ill for a couple of weeks during the second term, but he was evasive when we asked how many other days he had missed. Unlike the school year where Omar had taken the initiative to email us scanned copies of his reports, we had virtually no feedback. Having informed us that there was a further year of 'pre-course' carpentry to be done at Banjul, Omar said that he would like to do an IT course at Nifty within a year. To both us this seemed preferable to a further 3 years to get a carpentry diploma. This mid-course switch was the route we were headed down, until ... it transpired that Omar had attended only 1 day of the second term! He had just collected lunch allowance for the second and third term. We informed Omar that because he had not been honest with us, that unfortunately we would no longer be able to sponsor him.

When we decided to sponsor Omar, we knew that this was a risk. Having GETS as a conduit for the sponsorship was essential. We know that Omar has caused a lot more work for Helen than other students, and we are very grateful for all the help she provided. Omar has a bike and some money in his back pocket. He also has his year 9 certificates. Unfortunately due to his behaviour, he's missed out on what might have been the main chance.”

Fundraising News!

SCORERS UNITE(D)



Peter, Ruth and David Scorer

The wedding on 3rd June of my nephew David to his beautiful bride Ruth resulted in £1146 being raised for charity. This came about thanks to the generosity of my brother Peter who decided to offer a free bar to guests, only one condition though, guests frequenting the bar had to make a donation for charity.

GETS received £573 and Action Aid, supported by the bride's brother James, received the other £573.

Many thanks to all the guests who made generous donations, my brother for coming up with the idea and everyone else for making David and Ruth's day very special.

Helen Touray

News from the skills students...

My name is **Versine Jatta** I am a first year student at Sunrise Centre.

It gives me great pleasure to express my sincere gratitude to the people of GETS for upgrading the Centre.

What makes the Skills Centre more interesting is the rehabilitation of buildings and the learning materials that are provided for the smooth running of lessons. This will go a long way in achieving our dreams. And I am thanking all the GETS members who gave the support to the centre. What makes me like the skill Centre most is that we are all participating in lessons and the interaction between teachers and students, we realised that the skills Centre can make us to achieve our goals sooner than later.



I am **Fatou Barrow** I am a first year student in Sunrise Skill Centre. I am delighted to express my opinion on the recent changes that have taken place in the Centre. I have seen great improvement within the students interaction especially in English language. And the most amazing thing is how my fellow students are now interested in the skills practical like cookery batik and tie-dye. We would like to have more skills work like computer maintenance, networking etc in the future. We are really proud of GETS for providing us with all the necessary support. I am sure after the course I will be a self independent lady in terms of supporting my self and my family.

How GETS has changed the Centre

I am **Mbacho Jallow** and a second year student at Sunrise Skills Centre. I have been at the Sunrise Centre for the past five years but before and now are quite different. I have realised many changes and we the students are benefiting from these changes. What impresses me most is the improvement in the English language Communication. Students are now coming to school on time which was not happening before.

We were very much concern about the cookery materials for cooking practical purposes but now with your help all the needed utensils are provided and we have no more problems with cooking practical.

With your help we also realised the skills we have an also improve on them a lot. I have no doubt after school I will be self employed to help my family.

GOD BLESS YOU ALL.



RAISE FUNDS FOR GETSuk FREE WHEN YOU *SHOP* OR *BROWSE* ONLINE!

All you need to do is log on to the easyfundraising site at

www.easyfundraising.org.uk/gambiaeducationteaching



Graduation Success

The Graduation Ceremony was one of the most interesting ceremonies held in the Centre, and took place on the 20th May



The programme started with prayers in both Muslim and Christian ways. Then the Master of ceremony gave his remarks, who spoke positively about the changes that has taken place in the Centre and was very pleased with the developments.

Mr. Batchilly was the second speaker and he commended positively on the changes that took place in the Centre this year and developments that are undergoing. He then advised the graduates of the new challenges they will be facing in life and then also advice the existing students to be more hard working and dedicated.

The third speaker was Ndey Awa Khan Ceesay who was awarded the best business woman of the year 2010. She emphasised on determination, hard work and the importance of skill training to Nation building.

Meanwhile, Certificates were awarded to individual graduates and presents were given to the most discipline, outstanding and most regular students in form of cash.

Helen was the last speaker who thanked the entire body of GETS whose support makes this day a success. She also elaborated on the importance of fees to the Centre. - Sendeng Suso



The Graduants, staff and volunteers

Work Experience

11 of the Year 3 skills students have been offered jobs at the restaurants/hotels where they did their work placement, including:

4 Seasons Restaurant offered three students jobs: Binta Gas-sama, Isatou Sanyang and Mariama Sarr.

Kololi Beach Club offered one student a job: Oumie Sanneh

Club Sanseh Fashion Design offered two students jobs: Mbombeh Ceesay and Fatoumatta Nyaghado.

Ndey Awa Khan Fashion and Design offered two students jobs: Amie Jahateh and Jamma I Ceesay.

Well done to them!

"On behalf of the Staff, Students, Bakoteh Community and on my own behalf I extend my profound gratitude to all the Trustees and through you to all the volunteers and to everyone who in one way or the other have made this year's performance at the Sunrise Centre for excellence a great success.

This is first time in the history of The Centre to have almost 80% success of its graduates to have access to employment at their respective work replacement areas.

The graduation was exceptional and parents and students were all happy with the outcome of the performance of the student's achievement.

Thanks to your efforts and sacrifice. I love you all.

Education Director, Mr Alieu Batchilly"



Mr Batchilly