



GETS News!

May 2017

Issue 32

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GETS does what it says- again

If you go to the GETS Homepage you'll find the following:-

Our Mission.....

Reducing the likelihood of poverty by enhancing the life chances of Gambian children through education

The Njie family, who live near the Kotu watertank, already know it's true - their two children are sponsored through GETS - the younger one. Pa Mustapha, at Sunrise.

Although the family's budget is very limited, they took responsibility for a young relative (Jo-Jo Seh) from the North bank area of The Gambia. There she had no chance to attend school and spoke no English. When the family's sponsors discovered this in January, they managed to arrange for Jo-Jo to attend a local nursery school, supported by intensive coaching from Mrs Sanneh, one of Sunrise's outstanding teachers.



This was possible because Dawn (one of the Trustees) was working at Sunrise and could act as a "go-between". At her recent entry test Jo-Jo showed that she has already learnt a great deal and, with luck, will be able to start at Sunrise in September.

Words from Sponsor Erica Wren – Picture shows (L to R) Mum (Ngatou), Jo-jo, Pa Mustapha Njie and Dad (Tamsir)

It is a sobering footnote that sponsoring this family to educate their children, deal with a very serious health problem and set up a small business, has cost the sponsors the equivalent of 2 pints of beer per week over the last 4 years!

As it says on GETS' website - In The Gambia a little money goes a long way!

The Final Lower Basic School Class – Sep 2017

We are now getting ready for our new G6 class in our new primary school block. The very oldest children in the school (aged 11/12) will go up into this, our final class within the Sunrise School.

We have brought tables, chairs and the other equipment required to operate a new classroom from the UK where schools have given us free, end of life equipment, that was replaced.

We also have an advert in the local paper that (together with word of mouth) has brought in applications to join us in September.

One of our current teachers will be appointed to teach the G6 class, he is Mr Ousman Jaiteh.



Ousman Jaiteh

This brings the local staff employed by GETS in the Sunrise Centre to 32.

Sat 2/9 /2017 AGM goes to Driffield

This year our AGM is at the Driffield Council offices. (2-4 Market Pl, Driffield, Yorks YO25 6BW)

Thanks to Angela Longoni-Sarr for helping to organise us this year.

The meeting will start at 1200 with a free lunch and kick off formally around 1300. Parking nearby.



Everyone is welcome to attend and catch up on plans for next year and also find out what we did with your donations in 2016/17. ***Please let Sue know if you can attend on nelsonsue4@gmail.com***



Successful Students

- with a little help from GETS



Henry Prestige Nkoua

It is great to see our students graduating after successfully completing their school places. It is also pleasing when the students begin to take control of their next steps too.

This year Henry Nkoua completed his Grade 12 course and graduated from Glory Baptist School, in Kanifing, with the help of his sponsor, Kathryn Jonas.

Alhagie Alamu has completed his GETS sponsorship last year, helped by a West Country company (PB Design) who have been helping him and his family with sponsorship for many years now. He has now moved on to do a degree in Nursing (his mother is a Nurse too).

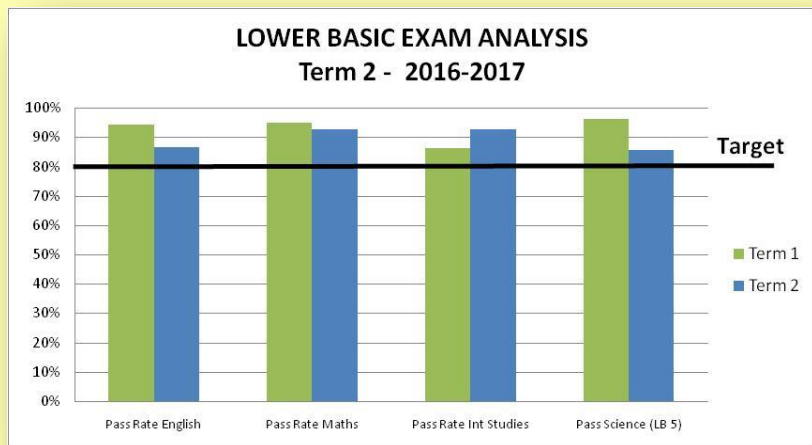


Alhagie Alamu

Alhagie recently wrote to thank his sponsor for all their support to his family and explained –

“I am now pursuing a four year a bachelor's degree in Nursing and Reproductive health in the university of the Gambia. When I got admitted to the university, I applied for a scholarship to a foundation called AforA meaning Academy for Academics where I undergo series of interview and luckily I got the scholarship. The foundation is now paying my bachelor's degree in Nursing.”

Improving Standards in Sunrise



We always look at how are the children and young people are doing in the Sunrise school.

In our Lower Basic classes their performance is also examined across all of Gambia too, in National Assessment Tests (NAT). With this in mind we are required to show performance of the LB on graphs, like the one shown here. Target pass rate is 80%.

Mr Cham has been looking at this performance and made a number of comments:-

- During Term 2 we lost some time due to the presidential elections this year and some children left the country for a time. The school was closed during part of January.
- The standard of the questions was made more difficult in Term 2 and were based on the NAT standard.
- The coverage of the syllabus in Term 1 was not that much, as it is just 61 days and all the questions were derived purely from Term 1 but Term 2 exams covers both Terms. Students may have already forgotten some notes of Term 1.

We are pleased with Results!

Your Trustee Team at GETS



Dawn, Tony, Sue, Paul and Barry all travelled down to a rare Face to Face meeting in Ross-on-Wye in April.

This was an unusual opportunity to meet together since travel plans to The Gambia mean one or more are often away from the UK. It was much easier to get some of the complex issues understood and agreed when meeting in the same room, rather than on a Skype conference call.

GETS needs more Trustees to keep going! If you feel that you could give up some of your time to help, then please approach one of the current team and find out what we do in a little more detail. We have achieved a lot and want to keep going, helping in a developing country. **The Gambia is currently 173 of 188 countries listed in the Development index (HDI)**

Fundraising – A big challenge for Karl Jackson



Kare and Karl

Kare, the wife of one of our supporters, Karl Jackson, sadly passed away unexpectedly at a very young age but out of this tragedy has come a series of fundraising initiatives from family and friends, all to help GETS do more in The Gambia.

Last year Karl's good friend, Rob Wakefield took on the Snowdonia Trail Marathon, completing it in just 6 hours and 13 minutes, raising over £18,000.

This year Karl himself sets out to walk the 177 mile trek along Offa's dyke., in 15 walking days.

Offa's Dyke is a great frontier earthwork built by Offa, King of Mercia from 757 to 796 A.D. It gives its name to a long distance footpath, one of Britain's National Trails, which runs from Sedbury, near Chepstow, to Prestatyn

This is an enormous challenge for Karl, both physically and psychologically. Donations can be made through Karl's MyDonation page at <https://mydonate.bt.com/fundraisers/karljackson2>

His target is £1,500 and he is already 50% of the way towards it with his target date of 9th August 2017 approaching. **I hope that you can help Karl to help GETS**

Karl's sister, Kirsty Jackson, is also raising cash for GETS by doing a **72 hour long dance** Between July 2nd-5th 2017 in honour of my Sister in Law, Kare. Kirsty's fundraising page can be accessed from the following link: <https://mydonate.bt.com/fundraisers/kirstyjackson1>



Sponsorship – A person or a Class?

We always have children who drop out of school because their families can't afford the fees, though they are small in Sunrise.

The procedure that we follow then checks that there is genuine hardship, with a member of the community visiting the home (compound) to effectively do a means test.

We then try and find sponsors –



Nanding Saidykhan 29/9/1999 – Skills 1 **Fatoumata Sambou** 16/11/1991 – Skills 1 **Fatou Touray** 26/4/1995 – Skills 2

These girls are hoping for sponsors now.

Or you could sponsor a whole class – <http://www.sponsoraclass.co.uk/>

Fundraising - Try “Give as you Live”

Fundraising can be fun and tough but it can also be easier than you think. By signing up to **Give as You Live** you simply buy your normal on-line purchases via links on the Give as you Live site and your normal supplier sends a donation to your selected charity. If you use the GETS link on our home page www.getsuk.org then GETS will receive these donations. **Simple!**



Give as you Live®

Water Pressure – a success story by Barry Young

For almost a year now, our mains water supply at the Sunrise school has been very poor. Due to very low pressure, the water storage tank we had installed above the toilets on the Lower Basic School first floor had not been filling, at times leaving the school with little or no water in the mornings and a very weak supply at other times. The situation was becoming intolerable as even basic health and hygiene was difficult to maintain. We raised this problem with NAWEC (The National Water and Electricity Company) last October and they sent one of their managers and a team of engineers to investigate. They promised to reconnect us to an alternative mains supply as soon as parts were available in the country.

Unfortunately, when I arrived at the school in February, nothing had happened and the supply was worse than ever. It had even been necessary to resort to collecting water in buckets from a compound across the road on some occasions!

We therefore drafted a letter addressed to the Director responsible at NAWEC and this was delivered by hand and followed up with a visit a few weeks later. Another visit by engineers and a debate about another possible solution ended up with the original plan being implemented and the school now has running water again. **Thank you NAWEC!**

Our persistence paid off resulting in a successful outcome to one of the many problems faced by the trustees and staff in running a school in The Gambia!

Note that during the period with water problems we have also implemented a number of water saving measures, including fitting push taps to try and avoid students leaving taps on, making water pressure even worse. GETS are very grateful to the Johnson Family who sponsored these improvements with money collected in memory of the late Alan Johnson.



Susan Jarjue - Cook