

# Gambian Children First

Stichting  
The Gambian Children First  
Nicolaas Witsenkade 15-huis  
1017 ZS Amsterdam



## Annual report 2017-2018



Foundation  
**THE GAMBIAN CHILDREN FIRST**

# Gambian Children First

Dear Donor,

Please find below the annual report and the *financial statements* of the Foundation **The Gambian Children First** covering the period running from August 2017 up to and including July 2018.

In the school year 2017-2018 we have supported a total of 57 pupils (mainly girls). Last school year, we have collected no less than over € 13,000 for which we sincerely thank you!

During our yearly visit, it was again made painstakingly clear to us that an increasing number of young men heads for Europe because of a lack of local possibilities and chances. In rural areas, this has even led to a surplus of girls. Shocked by the stream of desperate male refugees (around 7% of the total number of refugees that reached the Italian coast was of Gambian origin, i.e. more than 20,000 Gambians), we have decided to focus more on young adult men than we did in the past. In particular, we consider sponsoring students in the poor rural areas, because tourism makes the economic climate along the coast better than inland.

It is clear that your donation is again badly needed for the current school year. Our project is concrete, small-scale, and focused on individuals. Money does not end up in the wrong hands and we work with local experts.

The average costs are about € 155 per pupil for the school year 2018-2019. Of course, you are free to give more, or less. Each contribution is welcome.

You can transfer your contribution to our ING account IBAN **NL86 INGB 0005 2533 50** or the Rabobank, account number IBAN **NL72 RABO 0343 1927 13** in the name of *Stichting 'The Gambian Children First'* in Amsterdam.

The foundation (in Dutch: "stichting") is recognised by the tax authorities as a "Public Benefit Organisation" (in Dutch: "*Algemeen Nut Beogende Instelling (ANBI)*"), which means that your gift (in compliance with the applicable rules) is tax deductible (see our website).

Best regards,  
in the name of the Board of the  
Foundation The Gambian Children First,  
Caroline Schaap  
Chairwoman



# Gambian Children First

## Overview

After Jammeh's departure, now two years ago, and the arrival of president Adama Barrow, Gambia is now learning about freedom of thought and the freedom to dare and act. The international community has promised much funding with which the country can finally start innovating and improving practically everything: infrastructure (roads, bridges), education, healthcare, agriculture, etc.

Recent rumours indicate there is some political unrest in the country. Barrow's position is under pressure as a consequence of his plans to found a new political party. While there is no reason to think otherwise, so far, the population begins to fear that he does not put the interest of the Gambian people first. Elections will only take place in 2021. Therefore, there is still time to take the right steps.

As a consequence of the serious control by NAQAA with respect to the quality and content of the training programme, schools throughout the country feel the wind of change. Nepotism has disappeared and rules are enforced. This has consequences for schools that cannot fulfil all requirements. 'Our' schools have also felt the consequences and the board has therefore had to make difficult decisions: it has had to divest itself of schools.

People all over the country are eager to experience the effect of all those millions of dollars and euros coming from the European Union or the United Nations.

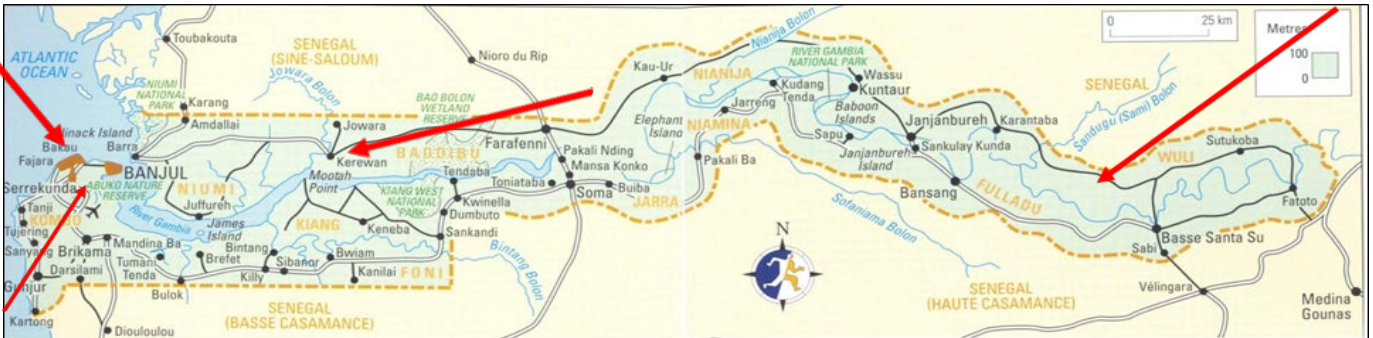
However, a country that can act free and democratically for the first time since its independence in 1965 needs time. Time to learn what it means to be independent. Time to make peace with the past. Time to change the tide of departure of all youths who are still leaving for Europe.



This year, we are again very grateful for your unwavering support. Up to the presidential offices, the foundation is known in Gambia as a reliable partner that has gone to great lengths, already for 15 years, in order to give the Gambian youth a future in which they can exert a profession, equipped with a diploma, a profession which they can make money. These successes are priceless.

# Gambian Children First

## Where are we active



## Our visit in May 2018



In May, the board travelled again to Gambia. We find it important to remind you that the board members always pay this working visit themselves. This year, it was necessary to have difficult conversations, new initiatives have been proposed and the developments in two schools have made us happy.

## NAQAA

The National Accreditation & Quality Assurance Authority (NAQAA) is responsible for all forms of vocational training, higher education and academic education. NAQAA grants licenses to the schools. To obtain these, the schools have to be able to prove that they have their bookkeeping in order, that their curriculum fulfils the requirements, that the teachers are certified, that they fulfil the security requirements for the school building and that they have enough hygienic sanitary facilities. A license is granted for three years. Schools that do not have their papers in order in time will get fined and can even be closed.

Last year, the board of NAQAA and Director Dr Jaw agreed to conclude a Memorandum of Understanding with each other. We are very happy that we have signed the MOU this year.



Thanks to the MOU, information is exchanged between the two parties with respect to the wellbeing of the schools and new education plans are shared with us. A visit to the NAQAA has become a fixed point on our agenda during our visit to the country.

# Gambian Children First

## Goodbye to the Basse Insight Training Centre

We have received Mr Abubacarr Krubally on the veranda of the little house at the beach next to Kunta Kinteh Apartments in Kotu. We did not travel to Basse to see there that the school has not made it. Mr Krubally has not succeeded in setting up an independent school with a license of NAQAA, in spite of his hard work and attempts to get funds to improve the school. We have explained to him that it no longer makes sense for us to pursue the cooperation, however sad that is for the region. Fortunately, not far from Basse, a skill centre supported called Julangel was set up by the government, for the pupils coming from the Basse Insight Training Centre.



We have thanked Mr Krubally warmly for the years in which we have had the pleasure to work with him. We keep the contacts warm, you never know...

## Julangel



Since the school was not yet operative, we have chosen not to visit the school in Julangel itself. We had a constructive conversation with Mrs Faal, director of the GTTI in Banjul. The direction of the skill centre in Julangel was allocated to this school for higher professional education - which has been recognised as a university in the meantime.

Mrs Faal told us that the government has invested much money in the school but that new setbacks presented themselves time and again. A setback means delay. Besides, much persuasion is needed to convince the parents in the region that their children should go to school. Time and again, it turns out that the costs are the problem. To help the school and the pupils a little, we also contribute to the purchase of safety shoes and overalls. In the meantime, we have received pictures of the school with boys and girls who have started their training in new overalls, enthusiastic about their education.

Next year, we will go there again, to see with our own eyes how many young people in the Upper River Region have been able to give a new direction to their lives.





# Gambian Children First

## PIA Kerewan and the migration problematics

The images broadcasted on television, the newspapers, the opinions of the people around us; we are almost getting used to it in the Netherlands...

However, visiting a country that is hit so hard by the yearly departure of almost 10,000 young men and women is another story. To speak with people there, who do not know where their brother is, or who have learnt that a beloved family member has drowned at sea is extremely shocking.

The government has drawn up a plan for the return of the youths stranded in Libya. They are brought back and once they are back in the country, they are briefly taken care of and they are offered training. Such a 'returnee' is not always welcomed with open arms by family and villagers. Indeed, he has not brought the "promised moon" and the family's poverty may even have increased.

In Kerewan, where PIA has an office, we were received by tribal chiefs and representatives of youth organisations. They wanted to make it clear that they understand they have to embrace the people who have returned.



Following a vocational training is important to get the economy going again in the region. Hairdressers are needed (particularly for women), tailors, car mechanics and carpenters.

It was an interesting meeting in the shadow of the big mango tree next to the school. For the next school year, we have promised to keep supporting the school and to increase the number of students, obviously under the

condition that the parents and the community continue to support them.

Recently, we have received a grant of 5000 euros from the Hofsteestichting. This amount, together with 200 euros coming from our own foundation and about 1,500 euros from PIA itself, allows us to finance the completion of 2 classes, sanitary facilities and a working space for the teachers.



Thanks to this project, it will be possible to further develop the training programme and there will be space for more students. This is an important boost for this region. We are grateful to the Hofsteestichting, which has made it possible to realise this project for the greater part. It was promised that the entire building project would be ready for our next visit in April/May 2019.

# Gambian Children First

## President International Award (PIA) Bakau



We are so proud of this school! Time and again, Mr Drammeh demonstrates that he is a modern man, who thinks twice before he acts. A motivated team and enthusiastic students work hard towards the future of the country. The training programme is adapted to the curriculum of NAQAA and takes two instead of three years.



Last year, we told about Ebrima, the brave young man who dared to approach us because he so much wanted to continue his education after obtaining his diploma from the PIA. Sweating and panting he arrived on his bicycle to greet us and to be able to tell us himself that he has successfully completed the training. In the meantime, he has started to work as an electrician.

Last year, he was still a shy boy, now he is an enthusiastic confident young man!

## Farewell to Sobeya Skill Training Centre

Last year, we already indicated that the school was in stormy weather. The licence was not granted by NAQAA because the building did not fill the necessary security requirements. Without a licence, it does not make sense to give the pupils education as a diploma will not be recognised by NAQAA. We have offered to take care of the other seven pupils we sponsored so that they could finish their training at another school. Unfortunately, this offer has not been accepted. Therefore, no school fees were paid.

We had a difficult conversation with Mrs Binta Sidibeh and Mr Saballeh, in which we had to explain that we had to terminate the cooperation. Both of them have been involved with the school and the girls for a long time. However, the school is closed upon NAQAA's request. It is a sad but understandable decision. This school, conceived by the women's movement, highly aware of the importance of development through education for girls, had to close as a consequence of bad management.



# Gambian Children First

## Taku Legaye

Under the inspiring leadership of Mr Jagne, the school flourishes as never before. This school has also received a visit from NAQAA, which considered that too many pupils miss too many lessons. A logical requirement that has to be fulfilled and that is important to be able to receive a recognised diploma.



For Mr Jagne this criticism was some kind of support for his decision to make it clear to the students that you cannot 'just' stay away. Presence and absence are registered, which stimulates the involvement and the responsibility of the student. Their behaviour has considerably improved.

Last year, we informed you that the school had received an extra amount to make the roof waterproof and to be able to realise the construction of an extra classroom. We have seen that the roof is repaired and that the construction of the new classroom is advanced. Recently, we received a picture of the beautifully tiled floor. Hopefully there will be enough money to equip the classroom with furniture as well.



During our visit, we had the pleasure to enjoy an excellent lunch in the school, prepared and served by the students.

Mr Jagne's health is fragile. He realises that it is important to transfer his knowledge to the school team. Even if he cannot be in school for health reasons, the show goes on. This demonstrates strong leadership in our view

## New project for schoolyear 2019-2020

The honorary consul of the Netherlands in Gambia, Henriette Sonko-Brummer, was very enthusiastic about a skill centre in the prison of Banjul and she has transmitted her enthusiasm to us. With the financial help of MRC Holland, classes were built and furnished. The Insight Training Centre has engaged itself to give education here. Once the detainees will have served their sentence, with a diploma, they will get a chance to make a good (re)start in society. For the next school year, we plan to help a number of young people there to change track.



# Gambian Children First

## Thank You for Your Continuous Support



Please, continue to support us so that we can train these professionals. A lot will change in Gambia in the coming years. We are very grateful to you for your willingness to be part of this change.

## Job Offers - Board of the Gambian Children First

You will undoubtedly know the call. Last year, we informed you that we are looking for new members of the board. Unfortunately, we have not yet succeeded in finding them. Our foundation is small, but it achieves great successes in Gambia. Since 2002, we are an important partner for the schools and we have already been able to help 600 young girls and boys to follow a vocational training. Being able to 'touch' a life, and being able to give it a positive twist is inspiring and gives us energy.

To be able to continue to do this (volunteer) work, we are looking for new members of the board. We could use at least two enthusiastic people. Affinity with Africa and participation in the yearly visit are of course decisive.



Have we been able to arouse your interest? Do you have any questions? Please do not hesitate to contact one of the members of the board or call +31 (0)6 26.84.44.09.

## Composition of the Board 2018-2019

Chairperson	Caroline Schaap	Caroline-in-afrika@hotmail.com
Secretary	Ernst Faber	ernstfab@xs4all.nl
Treasurer / Contactperson schools	Nella van der Laan	Tgcf.nellaheijnen@gmail.com
Special advisor/photographer	Simon Heijnen	
Local manager in Gambia	Phoday Touray	

# Gambian Children First

Balance sheet of the Foundation The Gambian Children First 31 July 2018				
	31 July 2018		31 July 2017	
<b>ASSETS</b>				
Student loan Phoday Touray (GMD 23,000)		€ 71,67		€ 162,72
Real estate		€ 5.000,00		€ 5.000,00
Cash		€ 21.179,21		€ 24.831,72
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>€ 26.250,88</b>		<b>€ 29.994,44</b>
<b>LIABILITIES</b>				
Capital		€ 12.250,88		€ 12.343,55
Short term debts (rest 20% tuition fees '16-'17)		€ 0,00		€ 3.650,89
Long term debts (reserve fund decreasing revenues)		€ 9.000,00		€ 9.000,00
Reserve for possible negative sales profit real estate		€ 5.000,00		€ 5.000,00
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>€ 26.250,88</b>		<b>€ 29.994,44</b>
Profit and loss account The Gambian Children First 01.08.2017 - 31.07.2018				
	2017-2018	2017-2018	2017-2018	2016-2017
	Result	Budget	Difference	Result
<b>RECEIVED</b>				
Received donations	€ 12.966,55	€ 12.000,00	€ 966,55	€ 20.620,84
Other revenues	€ 210,00	€ 0,00	€ 210,00	€ 91,47
Interest	€ 12,19	€ 15,00	-€ 2,81	€ 19,72
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>€ 13.188,74</b>	<b>€ 12.015,00</b>	<b>€ 1.173,74</b>	<b>€ 20.732,03</b>
<b>Expenses</b>				
Production costs (mailing and postage)	€ 87,60	€ 100,00	-€ 12,40	€ 58,50
Bank costs + currency differences	€ 459,91	€ 450,00	€ 9,91	€ 486,86
Costs in Gambia	€ 400,00	€ 0,00	€ 400,00	€ 350,00
Fee and costs Phoday Touray	€ 1.080,00	€ 1.080,00	€ 0,00	€ 1.080,00
Other costs	€ 200,71	€ 150,00	€ 50,71	€ 30,00
Website	€ 0,00	€ 250,00	-€ 250,00	€ 0,00
Special projects	€ 4.789,23	€ 0,00	€ 4.789,23	€ 377,82
Teaching costs 2017-2018	€ 5.771,78	€ 12.000,00	-€ 6.228,22	€ 10.926,81
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>€ 12.789,24</b>	<b>€ 14.030,00</b>	<b>-€ 1.240,76</b>	<b>€ 13.309,99</b>
<b>RESULT</b>	<b>€ 399,50</b>	<b>-€ 2.015,00</b>	<b>€ 2.414,50</b>	<b>€ 7.422,04</b>

Gambian Children  
First



*Keep supporting us!  
Because they need your help.*

<b>Foundations The Gambian Children First</b>	
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