

THE SENEGALESE ARRIVE!

Each time we run a course something special occurs, this time it was the arrival of 5 teachers from Senegal who joined our group and worked with us for four of the days. It was a special privilege to meet these pioneers and we hope that their initial contacts will flourish into three way educational partnerships between schools in Senegal, The Gambia and United Kingdom.



*Ndoumbé Diouck
from CEM Nioro Darou Salam,*

On the first morning we held a seminar with our Gambian colleagues and the new arrivals from Senegal to discuss the benefits and pitfalls of international school partnership development.

The Senegalese teachers all delivered powerpoints about their schools and their education system.



Alassane Ndour from CEM Lour Escale, Kafrine



Sala Dieng from CEM Nioro Sud, Nioro



*Alassane Kane from
CEM Keur Sette
Diakhrou, Nioro*



Modou Gueye from Lycée Keur Madiabel, Keur Madiabel

Everybody was naturally somewhat tentative at first, but as the coffee and talk flowed so the discussions became animated and eye-opening. For many of the Senegalese it was their first visit to The Gambia, and indeed neither had the Gambians visited Senegal. This was surprising to the UK teachers, as both spoke the same local language and some lived very close to the Gambia/Senegal border.

CLAIRE'S VIEW

During the autumn term (2014) I was asked by my Head teacher if I would like to visit the Gambia. My immediate response was, "most definitely". I had heard so much about Gambian life from Anne Calvert and Jane Cradock, who have been instrumental in developing and strengthening links between Belle Vue and Bakau Newtown Lower Basic School. As I am currently taking our school through Level 1 of the Rights Respecting Schools' Award, I saw this as a fantastic opportunity.

Before the visit, I had heard so many fascinating stories from both Anne and Jane, although I have to admit I was still a little uncertain. However I had no reason to be concerned. The grade 5 pupils whom I taught, along with Jane and Sue and Janette (Northfield Road) were an absolute delight!

Upon arrival at Bakau Newtown Lower Basic, I immediately felt 'at home' within the school setting. The staff were incredibly welcoming and the children greeted us with their beautiful smiles. A warm and friendly atmosphere filled the school. Pupils in Gambia are clearly taught in a different manner to the children at home, however once the children quickly got to know and trust us, they responded well and enjoyed the activities which had been prepared. Delivering the Rights Respecting Schools session was a complete joy, as the children demonstrated a good level of understanding with regards to knowing their own rights.

I was pleasantly surprised as to how cool it felt in the classroom, when the temperatures outside hit just above 30 degrees. Following the morning teaching sessions, we often ended up doing what the Gambian children do best, singing! It was lovely to teach them new songs and in turn they

shared some of their favourites with us.

There were times during my stay when my emotional responses were heightened to a level which I wasn't fully prepared for. One particular aspect of the week which I felt compelled to help with was on my first day, I walked into the classroom to find children sharpening their pencils with razor blades! Jane and I brought pencil sharpeners for the class and these were gratefully received. It was a real 'eye opener' to see how a purchase so small could make such a big difference. The children were so delighted with them.

One of my most vivid memories of the visit was taking grade 5 pupils to Bijilo Forest Reserve and the beach. 40 very excited pupils climbed aboard the coach and we were serenaded en route with their lively songs. Very few of the children had visited the beach and park and it was humbling to know that we had provided the children with an experience they would never forget. We had great fun and even had time to squeeze in a 'who can build the best sand castle competition?'

If asked would I go back the Gambia again, there would be no hesitation in saying a very positive 'yes'. I would strongly urge any staff or governors to 'seize the opportunity with both

hands'. Visiting Bakau Newtown and experiencing all the other wonderful opportunities organised through Des and Pam (The Global Dimension Partnership/B&C Educational.) has completely changed my outlook on life. I came back from the Gambia on a real high and after being back in the U.K now for several weeks, I still feel a real buzz when talking about the visit.

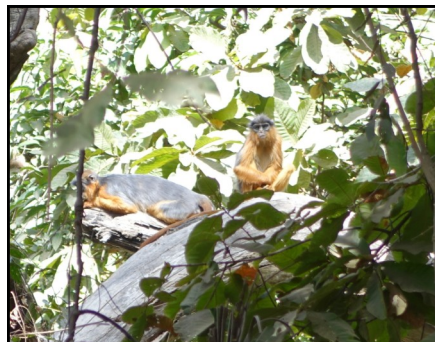


A woman winnowing discarded groundnut shells. With the small pieces of groundnut she rescues she will be able to make local soap to sell in the market. An example of the knowledge, resilience and hard labour of Gambian women.

BIJILO MONKEYS



Green Vervet monkey



Western Red Colobus Monkeys

The field trip to the Bijilo Forest Reserve was funded by Northfield Road and Belle Vue and was a remarkable success. The children learnt so much from their enjoyable experience. For our first timers and for some of the Gambians it was the first time they had seen monkeys in the wild.

"Unforgettable!" said Claire from Howley

Bijilo Beach and Forest Fieldwork



African Wilderness ?

From the ground the teachers and the children felt like they were exploring primitive African wilderness, cutting through the bush, shaded by tall and strange trees, listening to the calls of birds and monkeys, anxious about insects and snakes. The beach seemed pristine and more or less untouched, where were Adam and Eve in this tropical paradise?

Unfortunately from the air it can be clearly seen that Bijilo is little more than a civic park under threat on all sides from the encroaching demands of the tourists and the developing needs of the Serrakunda suburbanites.

Nevertheless the children enjoyed finding out about the beach and forest environments and hopefully theirs will be future voices saving the Gambian landscapes.



Bakau Newton children excitedly hunting for shells oblivious to the dangers of the ocean swell



Sharing wisdom fostering mutual learning



Wensu and the children learning new sand castle building skills under the eye of Vicky



Culture clash, the young Gambians clearly interested in the camera, whereas Janette and Claire are more concerned about what is lurking behind the rhun palm tree

The Gambia College: Anti-Malaria Awareness

Des and Pam were once again pleased to be invited by Madam Isatou Ndow, Head of the School of Education, to bring the group to share some teaching and learning ideas with the teacher trainees. The theme was based on spreading the word about malaria prevention and the UK teachers and the Gambian trainees entered into the spirit of the enterprise with much enthusiasm and energy.



Learning can be fun!



Mel and Jenni in full discussion



Guy animated



Outdoor session in grounds



Jenni discusses the issues about combating malaria with students who have had real experience of the devastation caused by the disease.

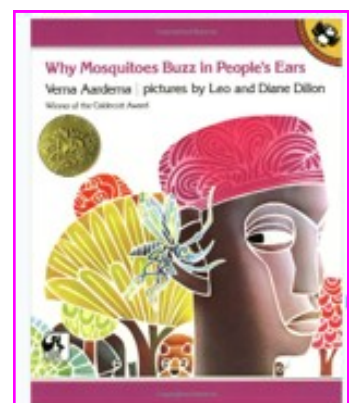


Hand, pair, share causes much mirth



Why Mosquitoes Buzz in People's Ears

The UK teachers shared a session with the trainee teachers that started with this West African tale about a mosquito who tells a story that causes a jungle disaster. The teachers and trainees participated in hand, pair share and a diamond nine activity, which ended in an agree-disagree debate on whether money should be spent on education or mosquito nets.



Further Phonics at Amana

The GDP have developed a working relationship with Amadou Jatta and Mamat Mbowe of the Gambian Secretariat of Islamic and Arabic Education. Indeed they always ask for three days training not three hours! The Islamic schools in The Gambia, which comprise some 25% of the education system are being required to teach the Gambian National Curriculum in Maths, English, Science and Social and Environmental Studies in English. There is a great deal of training required to upskill these teachers, and we are able to offer one-off sessions twice a year. Mel 's session this time built on what she delivered in November and resulted in a certificate for the attendees.



Paul Relaxes in Sun

Paul spent the mornings on his research into Madrassah education in the Gambia, and welcomed a well-earned rest. He investigated some 11 schools guided by Amadou Jatta and considered how best the training needs of the teachers might be served. The needs analysis report has now been submitted to Amana and copies are available.



Spend a Penny, Donate a Penny: Toilet Rebuild Success

Although we do not believe that charity should be part of a successful partnership, sometimes needs must. The 2100 children at Bakau Newtown LB were without toilet facilities when the existing ones collapsed into their own cesspit!!! Northfield Road children and staff raised funds by donating a penny every time they spent a penny. There was also a used toy sale. The photo shows Sue Drew and Janette Lamb presenting Haddy Njie, the Bakau Newtown LB head with a cheque. Belle Vue also raised funds and have subsequently sent a cheque by sponsoring children both in Wordsley and Bakau to run/walk around the running track.



Bird-watchers Spot

Two of the amazing birds seen on the study visit, but who knows where they were spotted ? (answer on back page)



Pam, never far from her ipad and hand-bag, keeps a watchful eye over all the proceedings

PARTNERSHIP PROGRESS

Our visits have a two fold purpose, one is to introduce participants, especially the newcomers, to the Gambian way of life and culture. The other is the work we do to encourage the development of meaningful and sustainable school partnerships between UK and Gambian schools. The schools are at different stages of the partnership process.

Northfield Road Primary has now been working with schools in The Gambia for four years and they have developed a mutual understanding between themselves and teachers at Bakau Newtown. Janette and Sue have worked really hard with their Gambian colleagues to make their partnership successful and certainly they have now moved from an **embedding** to an **expanding partnership**. The children at both schools have benefitted from this global link.



Ashwood Park Primary have made great strides with their partnership with St John's School for the deaf, underlined by the visit of Marian Allen, the deputy, to Ashwood in May. They have moved from **preparing** to **developing partnership**.



Belle Vue Primary have been working with Gambian schools for four years. Led by Anne and Jane they are working towards an **expanding partnership**, enhanced by the planned visit of Wensu Faye.



Howley Grange Primary have a **developing partnership** with Wellingara Lower Basic. We all hope that Kumba Saidy will be able to get a visa to make a visit later in the year.



Netherbrook Primary are moving from **developing** to **embedding their partnership**. Their curriculum has been organised to ensure that their children develop as global citizens and they are looking forward to the visit of Lamin Saho, from Bakau Newtown.



Lutley Primary have had a long continuing and **expanding partnership** with Talinding Lower Basic. For reasons beyond their control they have not yet received Gambian visitors, but they are striving to make this happen.



The highlighted partnership terms are those suggested by the British Council, namely a developmental process involving Preparing, Developing, Embedding and Expanding partnerships. All these schools are to be commended on the great strides they have made in providing shared learning experiences for the benefit of the children in both countries. Developing overseas school partnerships is a difficult road to tread but the outcomes can be truly remarkable. All schools are grateful for the support of their heads, governors and parents in helping them develop successful partnerships and an enhanced and relevant school curriculum.

Bafaloto Quarry: digging to new depths

This "quarry" is a series of pits some distance from the eastern end of the runway at Banjul International Airport. During our visit large scale earth moving machinery were further extending the workings by gathering building materials for the latest extensions to the Airport. Originally these pits were left after U.S. engineers extended the runway to take the space shuttle in an emergency. They used laterite as hardcore for the new runway which they excavated using mechanical earth movers a completely different technology from the methods observed by the GDP group

The faces left by the mechanical diggers are up to 20 metres

steep in places and the area is now used to extract building materials like blocks, hardcore and gravel using hand tools and hard, hard labour.

Other miners burrow into the ground to extract kaolin clay which is found below the laterite layer. This is sold in the markets as medicinal relief for pregnancy sickness. The miners have their own plots to work, but often work co-operatively, however when a lorry arrives to buy the stone there is often fierce competition to sell. Once the deal is struck the miners then have to load the lorries by hand and shovel. The work is undoubtedly hot, hard, dangerous and poorly paid. Visitors often see it as almost slave labour, however many of the miners see it as an opportunity to make some extra cash during the dry season when there is no work on the farms.



Surface workers grading laterite to make various grades of building resource



An indication of the claustrophobia and danger of kaolin mining at Bafaloto. Reminiscent of mining conditions in the Victorian Black Country.

Making gravel in the sun, this lady has been working here for 14 years yet still does not earn enough to send all five of her children to school



Old habits die hard, Des explaining the development of tropical lateritic soils when the group reached Makasutu, but not even Muhammed could summon any interest !

More Henley than mangrove swamp

Makasutu Cultural Forest

The mangrove cruise gave participants the opportunity to investigate from close-up the complex working of the mangrove swamp ecosystem.

They saw how the mangroves and their aerial roots encouraged the mud to collect and fauna to find a habitat including creek oysters, hermit crabs, fiddler crabs, tower shells, mud skippers, monitor lizards, fish and birds.



HAPPINESS CONFERENCE AT BAKAU NEWTOWN LOWER BASIC SCHOOL



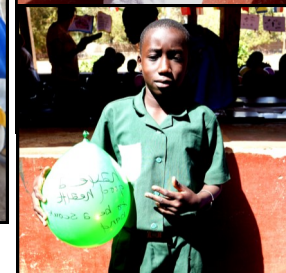
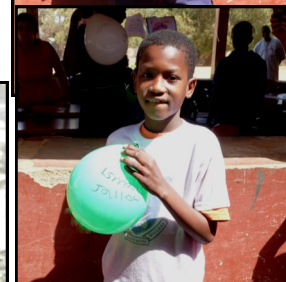
We celebrated International day of happiness with the staff and children at Bakau Newtown LB School. Our Senegalese teachers took full part in the activities and there were pupils from Wellingara and Talinding as well. Lamin Jaru, represented the UN, he is the UNESCO representative for The Gamabia and Des took on the role of Ban Ki-moon.

The children enjoyed all the activities, especially the laughter yoga, and of course all children were excited by the balloons and writing their own messages.

Claire from Belle Vue and Sala from CEM Nioro Sud get involved in all the happiness



Happy even without a conference!



From: Haddy Njie

Sent: 16 April 2015 18:59:34

Dear all,

Many apologies for not being in contact for so long. I hope all is well. We have just resumed work after a short Easter break and things are back to normal. How is everything at your schools and how about the students. I hope everybody is fine and in good health.

I would like to thank you on behalf of the parents, staff and student of the School for your kind gesture and the invaluable support you have rendered to the School. The parents are very happy especially with the exposure you gave to the children by taking them to the Monkey Park. In the same vein the International Day of Happiness will always be remembered. It was both educative and interesting. I must confess, we all enjoyed every bit of it. The balloons are still in the library and some in my office. Lets always be happy and keep on laughing. ha ha ha ha ha ha ha ha ha ha

Once again,
Thank you very much

Makumbuya Women's Horticultural Project

Throughout the Gambia there are many horticultural gardens run by co-operatives of ladies. They were developed to provide income generating opportunities for wives, as often a man's income (work and cash) did not provide enough for his wives, especially if they wished to send their children to school.

The notion was based on the fact that if water could be found during the dry season then the fallow grazing land (or rice fields in some areas) could produce vegetable crops.

The ladies at Makumbuya have had several wells dug and during the dry season they pull wa-

ter from the deep wells and carefully irrigate their crops, we saw aubergines, bitter tomatoes, peppers, cabbages and other vegetables growing. It was unfortunate for the ladies that because of renewed major excavation at the neighbouring Bafoloto Quarry some of their land had been removed and they have had to move some of their plots.

This slightly higher land is used for cattle and goat grazing during the rainy season, while the rice is grown down hill nearer the creek. During the vegetable season it has to be carefully fenced to keep out the animals.

Muhammed happy to demonstrate the work of the ladies



Some of the ladies at the Makumbuya Women's Horticultural Project.



The Compound Experience

The group was grateful to Fatou Jallow who invited the group to her mother's compound for a Gambian lunch of benachin and domoda eaten communally with our fingers and provided experiences in various arts and crafts, including tie and dye, batik and

sand painting. The cora player plucked his instrument to provide soothing music. Judging by the outcomes it is suggested that the participants do not give up their day jobs!



The cook in her kitchen

The Support Team have their lunch at leisure while group waits



It is a recognised challenge to get a quick lunch in a Gambian tourist restaurant, especially with a group. However at one lunchtime the group were all fed and watered in record time and then we found the drivers and guide eating a la carte in the posh part of the restaurant. Des and Pam were not happy! Muhammed, Faks, Lamin and Mau look after us especially well and the visits certainly benefit from their care, knowledge and humour, but this was taking the biscuit!



Art in action at the Paradise Beach wrestling ring

Wrestling and ritual at Paradise Beach

Art Lavelle the official photographer: most of the photos in the Gazette were taken by Art – many thanks. indeed..

Hustle and bustle in Serrakunda Market



Cor! What a whopper! Claire holds one of the large wooden mallet style iron. Jane says no to doing the ironing!



Guy gets down to work, helping the aluminium recyclers finish a large cooking pot after it has been taken from the mould and allowed to cool



Serrakunda is the most rapidly growing urban centre in The Gambia. The main market is complex and very busy. We visited the market stalls, met the aluminium recyclers, truly nothing in tThe gambia is wasted. Saw the saw mill and watched the wax cloth being pounded by wooden mallets, this ironing process softens the cloth.



'Come on Des, surely you can manage something for the biogas unit.' says Kelly Smeets the passionate and hard working environmentalist and business women who runs My Farm.



We visited My Farm an exciting and different development project which combines sustainability, education and business entrepreneurship in one location. We enjoyed wonjo juice and cakes baked in the solar oven. We saw micro-agriculture, biogas, soap and honey production, all organised on the theme of 'From seed to business'. We were impressed by the local children coming to use ipads and other resources in the education centre.

The editor is grateful for the use of the photographs and apologises for précising the articles that people were kind enough to write. Des

Caption Contest

Best caption wins a copy of Fatou's First Day



Parachute game threatens to get out of hand



Happiness Conference is not for everybody!

I think I need them all!



Bird answers: Hornbill in Bijilo Forest Reserve
Thick-knee from cruise at Makusutu Cultural Forest

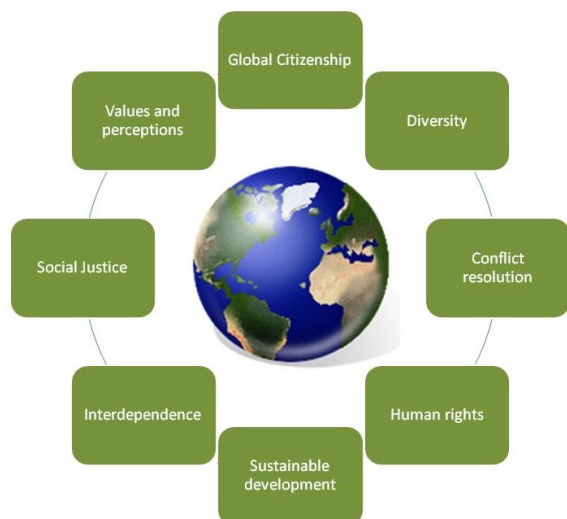
For all your resources for teaching about global citizenship
and
the wider world visit our new website:

www.primary-school-resources.com



GLOBAL DIMENSION PARTNERSHIP

"Supporting schools in developing the global dimension"



The Global Dimension Partnership is based on the promotion of the global dimension in primary schools and on the development of international partnerships and activities with special reference to linking with The Gambia.

The partnership supports the goals of:

- embedding the global dimension in primary school curricula.
- meeting the needs of pupils in a fast changing interdependent world
- improving global teaching and learning
- establishing links and partnerships between Gambian and UK schools encouraging pupils to become active and responsible global citizens

The partnership offers consultancy on embedding the Global Dimension, guided educational study visits and continuing school support.

CONTACT

Email:

globdp@hotmail.co.uk

GDP
37 Brett Drive
Bartley Green
Birmingham
B32 3JU



The butterfish has the last laugh

The basic Global Dimension CPD package includes two briefing sessions, The Gambia Study Tour and two follow up meetings and costs
£875.00

Dr Des Bowden
Pam Copeland