

Teacher-training in The Gambia – what a difference a year makes ...



2011



2010

A long-held ambition of Gambian educator and trainer, Lisong Bah, had been to develop pre-school training for teachers and thus to provide early childhood education of real quality for her country. There had been teacher-training through Gambia College for some time, but there was no specialized training available in the field of early childhood development (ECD).

In June 2010, after years of hard work and discussions with donor organisations and national government, Lisong at last had her goal in sight.

An eminently suitable property became available in Kololi, offering great training facilities as well as a model pre-school – all on one site! (Used previously for garment manufacturing) This meant that teachers could not only learn through workshops and training sessions, but through classroom experience and practice too.



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Of course, there was work to be done to prepare the buildings for their new use – painting and decorating, of course, but also re-organising the office and filing systems, setting up the pre-school rooms with tables and chairs, a reading corner, acceptable lavatories ... all of which needed funding ...

Volunteers from *people and places* provided the first steps in preparation – working with Lisong to design and develop teacher-training courses and materials, as well as the 'Greenie Book' project to address environmental issues at pre-school level.

But there remained the question of how to fund the renovation, decoration and preparation of the buildings ... essential materials and labour were costed at £2350, and TravelPledge publicized this as a targeted cause for the Futures Training Centre ...

There were some funds kindly donated by *people and places* volunteers, and then – in April 2011 – the full amount was donated by Thomas Cook! The end was now achievable (well, the beginning, really – Futures had the green light to complete all the preparation work. FANTASTIC!

Our Non Exec Chair Professor Harold Goodwin was able to hand the cheque over to Lisong a couple of weeks later.



Builders and decorators moved in just before the rainy season started – and look at the Centre now!



Volunteer Yvonne show off the new reading corner with Lisong

In July 2011, the official opening of Futures Training Centre took place with much fanfare, attended by local government ministers and media – and the first ECD teacher training and workshops proved tremendously successful and were enjoyed by all.

Well done Futures and THANK YOU, Thomas Cook!

The following detail was received from Lisong, along with some great photos:



Dear all,

Thank you for congratulating FTF, indeed this is a great achievement because this is the first workshop held by FTF in FTF premises.

The Aim of The Day

To conduct end of pilot evaluation workshops by inviting trainee teachers who were trained on methods of teaching the "greenie book". The greenie book is designed to address environmental issues at home, in the schools and in the communities. The objective of the project is for the children to disseminate the environment messages in the homes and in the communities they live.

Who Attended?

Selected teachers that represented ECD facilities in Regions 1 & 2 that are members of Association of Early Childhood Educators (AECE), Rep from National Environment Agency (NEA), the media (press and TV), The Chairperson of FTF Board, The Chairperson of AECE, Children representatives, the Coordinator of the project George Riegg the project coordinator and myself.

Were they funded to attend by government?

The government collaborated with FTF by making experts available from the NEA and the Ministry of Basic and Secondary Education (MoBSE), ECD Unit and the Curriculum Directorate. They work with the editorial team in partnership with Author and illustrator called Caroczel, George, Chair person & Secretary of AECE and myself.

Funding was provided by GEF (Global Environment Facility) - UNDP SGF (Small Grants Project).

The marching funds to expand the project was provided by APE (Artists Project Earth) UK.

The Greenie Book project has been implemented by Futures Training Foundation in partnership with AECE and collaboration with MoBSE and NEA.

I am happy that you would share the information with the Volunteers that worked with FTF on this project, and they know about the intention to transfer FTF to Kololi.

Have a good day.

it is my pleasure to share good news when they happen.

Lisong