



**GIVE Report**  
**Following the Volunteer Programme**  
**in**  
**The Gambia**  
**2020**

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### 1: INTRODUCTION-Executive Summary.

This year, 2020, is a significant year in the history of the GIVE project as it marks the tenth year, a decade of GIVE volunteers sharing their experience as teachers with their colleagues in The Gambia. The collaborative and supportive partnership between Irish and Gambian teachers which is the core of GIVE’s mission has grown in strength and the fruits of that partnership are now reaching more and more teachers and classrooms in The Gambia.

This year’s GIVE team of 15 Irish volunteers was joined in the delivery of its programme by a strong cohort of Gambian teachers – a true partnership which we hope will sustain the professional development of Gambian teachers long into the future.

GIVE programme 2020 again covered four different areas in education:

- Professional Development of teachers in Early Childhood
- Lower Basic Education (Grades One and Two),
- Compensatory Education for students in three Skills Centres and
- Professional Development Seminar with Principal Teachers.

Prior to the Principals seminar, GIVE Management Team met with a sub-group of the principals to design a programme which would reflect the needs of their colleagues. GIVE values enormously the engagement of the principals in this professional development programme and their support for the GIVE programme with their staffs.

GIVE is very conscious of the challenges faced by school communities in The Gambia. We commend the Principals, the teachers and the staff in the Catholic Education Secretariat in their endeavours to overcome these many challenges. We are especially grateful to Fr. David Jarju, Mr Edward Gibba, Mr. Dawda Faye and Mr. Andrew Jassey from the CES for making the GIVE volunteers welcome and for their support for the GIVE programme, 2020.

We value deeply the support which the GIVE project has received from Bishop Gabriel Mendy C.S.SP, and since its commencement from Bishop Robert Ellison C.S.SP (now retired).

GIVE is proud of its achievements in The Gambia over the past ten years, none of which would have been possible without the dedication and commitment of the volunteers and the generous contribution of its benefactors. Thank you to each and every volunteer for your dedication, for your commitment, your wonderful camaraderie and to your families and friends for their support. Our sincere thanks to the Irish National Teachers Organisation and to the Retired Teachers Association of Ireland for their financial support – their support has been critical to the success of GIVE's project.

Our sincere thanks to Comhar Linn Credit Union and to the Gambian Teachers Union Co-operative Credit Union for facilitating the administration of the GIVE project and to Michael McHugh and Mr Babacur Joof who have been constant in their guidance and support for the work of GIVE.

We value the input and advice from Comhlámh and especially their supportive role in preparing volunteers for the important work which they undertake in The Gambia.

Michael Griffin, Chairperson, GIVE

April, 2020.

## 2: PREPARATION

### 2.1 Gambia.

In preparation for the 2020 programme GIVE's Management team met staff of the Catholic Education Secretariat in The Gambia, to discuss how resources and support would be deployed and how best the programme would be made sustainable into the future.

During the week 7<sup>th</sup> to 11<sup>th</sup> October GIVE met with key figures in the CES, Fr. David Jarju Mr. Gibba, and Mr. Dawda Faye, with a number of Gambian facilitators in Early Childhood Education and in Lower

Basic Education, with a representative group of Principal teachers and with Sr. Valerie and Sr. Rosene, Principals of two of the three Skill Centres.

Agreement was reached on:

- the location and the duration of the courses,
- the number of course participants,
- the design and delivery of the course modules,
- the availability and input of the Gambian facilitators and
- the resources required for delivery of the programme and any attendant workshops.

We discussed the requirements of Child Protection policies and agreed that we would discuss the matter at greater length during the GIVE visit to The Gambia in January 2020. We also met with Mr. Silla of the Bungalow Beach hotel to agree accommodation arrangements for Spring 2020.

## 2.2 Ireland

Volunteers attended two pre-departure meetings on 25<sup>th</sup> and 26<sup>th</sup> November in Club na Múinteoirí, Parnell Square, in preparation for their visit to The Gambia; most of the volunteers had volunteered with GIVE in recent years and were familiar with the country, its people, culture and mores. Sive Bresnihan, Development Education Officer, Comhlámh, engaged all volunteers in groups on their understanding of development issues with a particular emphasis on ecological sustainability and alerting volunteers on our responsibility to take account of the impact which our work makes on the environment.

Michael Griffin updated the group on GIVE's Child Safeguarding Policy and drew the attention of the volunteers to the implications for them and for GIVE of the Risk Analysis set out in that policy.

Sandra Neville alerted the volunteers to personal responsibility for their own safety and wellbeing and addressed some challenges posed by culture norms in Gambian society.

Margaret Cunningham and Patricia Britton refreshed volunteers' understanding of TEFL which they may find useful in the teaching of English in The Gambia.

A group of 15 volunteers departed from Dublin on 18<sup>th</sup> January 2020, travelled via Lisbon and arrived in The Gambia in the early hours of 19<sup>th</sup> January and set to work on Monday, 20<sup>th</sup> January.

## 3: EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION

### January 18th - 31st 2020

#### **Context**

GIVE has worked with Early Childhood Educators since 2011. Several Gambian ECD teachers are now facilitating workshops based on their training with GIVE.

Due to the success of our Trainer of Trainer (TOT) programme for ECD Gambian teachers, GIVE, in collaboration with the Catholic Education Secretariat, offered to run a three - year programme training a new set of ECD teachers, commencing in January 2020.

GIVE has offered financial assistance to the CES in 2018 and 2019 to maintain a core group of facilitators in the system. This has proven successful to date and now they are being asked to help train their colleague teachers to become facilitators.

Choosing to train the future facilitators over a three year period was a deliberate decision by GIVE. It is necessary to increase the number and build a wider cohort of facilitators and thus reduce the demands on the existing group. We envisage that the training each year will cover one of the three stages in ECD, starting this year 2020 with Nursery 1 and followed in 2021 with Nursery 2.

We intend to give them a thorough understanding of the Nursery 1 programme so that, as a facilitator, they will deliver it with confidence and competence.

Our aim here was to avoid the tendency - often present in Nursery 1,2,3 - to keep repeating the same teaching without any deliberate progression.



As part of our preparation, we attended GIVE meetings of volunteers in Dublin on November 25<sup>th</sup> and 26<sup>th</sup>. It was an occasion to meet the entire GIVE team and also to have an initial meeting with our own ECD team (Angela Griffin, Patricia Britton, Margaret Cunningham). A general overview of our programme was established and the roles of each within clarified.

The team held a second meeting in Cavan on January 8<sup>th</sup>. This meeting was very productive as it defined more clearly the main components and methodologies we would use during our forthcoming workshop in The Gambia.

**GIVE Volunteers:** Margaret Cunningham, Patricia Britton and Angela Griffin.

### 3.1 Delivery of programme.

#### Assessment of Location

The space allocated for our two- week workshop was St. Therese’s Parish Hall, an empty, unprepared space at the rear of the CES premises. Its proximity to the CES hall facilitated a joint meeting of attendees at both ECD and Lower Basic Workshops first thing every day and enabled the CES kitchen staff to provide lunches for both groups.

#### Purchase of resources

Having established the final number of attendees - 12 in all, 10 female and 2 male- resources were purchased that would provide all with the necessary “tools” for the workshop.

Having eventually furnished our “classroom” with tables and chairs, introductions took place, the GIVE team to the 12 Gambian teachers and vice versa. The format of the workshop was also explained, focusing on the end goal i.e. to become a facilitator, not just a good classroom teacher.

On Friday of Week 1 an informal meeting with ten senior facilitators (Trainer of Trainers) took place. It gave us the opportunity to hear and understand the difficulties and challenges they face as facilitators. These are Philomen Mendy, Marie Bass, Ida Mendy, Ellen Gomez, Francis Mendy, Elizabeth Sylva, Therése Gibba, Josephine Mendy, Kaddy Mendy, Celestine Sambou.

We also offered them the chance to co-present in week 2 of the workshop. All were eager to take part so teaching subjects were chosen and guidance was given to help them prepare.

They were then introduced to the new group of facilitators and a very worthwhile exchange of questions, answers and experiences took place.



**The Early Childhood Education team is growing.**

**January, 2020.**

The three GIVE volunteers are joined by the Trainers of Trainers, and by twelve teachers who attended the first session of a three-year training programme.

## **Content**

The focus of all the content taught was on the **Nursery 1 programme**.

We applied the “tried and tested” format used in previous workshops for facilitators.

### Subjects:

- Maths: It focused on the fundamentals of Maths, respecting the ability of a four-year old child who learns through play and sensory activities.
- English: Focus was on the acquisition of a new language (English) with emphasis on the teaching of language through rhymes, poems, story, and actions. Books 1, 2 and 3 in phonics

### On-going teacher development

- TEFL: Continued development for trained and new facilitators in the components and structure of the English language. Practice given in sentence formation.
- Classroom Management: Drawing on their own experience, highlight the main areas of classroom management: classroom environment, teacher, child. Role play to highlight best teaching practice.

## 3.2 Assessment

How to assess our programme for facilitators?

- Probably our best indicator of progress and success is to look at the facilitators already trained. We have reason to be optimistic as this group is doing worthwhile work, sometimes at great personal and family sacrifice. Their delivery of the syllabus is good, their eagerness to work is strong and they are getting results. **See Appendix One**
- The enthusiasm, intelligence and cooperation of the 12 ECD group was wonderful, a pleasure to work with them. They were ready for the challenge of becoming a facilitator and very appreciative of help received. We hope that they will be given the opportunity to finish the course.
- The Course Evaluation sheets were completed by each member of the group. **See Appendix Two.**

## 3.3 Workshop Programme

A continuing programme of three workshops coordinated by Mr. Gibba (CES) and facilitated by Elizabeth Sylva, Josephine Mendy, Therése Gibba and Francis Mendy was set to be delivered to local ECD teachers– in Brikama at the end of February 2020, in Bwiam at the end of March 2020, and in

Soma in May, 2020. The Brikama cluster workshop was carried out successfully over two days with twenty participants from different ECD centres.

An evaluation of this workshop was carried out by participants and will be forwarded to GIVE.

Because of the COVID 19 pandemic the remaining two workshops have been postponed until later.

## 4: GIVE/CES Lower Basic Workshops 2020

### 4.1 Irish Lower Basic Team 2020:

Mary Cunningham, Anne Buckeridge, Eibhlin MacNamara, Pauline Moran, Angela Griffin.

### **Gambian Facilitators 2020:**

Alice Badjan, Louise Jatta, Anna Jarjou, Margaret Gomez, Agnes Mendy, Josephine Gomez, Nancy Gibba Demba, Mathew Mendy.

### 4.2 Delivery of Programme

The GIVE programme of workshops for Gambian Facilitators and for Lower Basic teachers took place over a period of four weeks, from January 20<sup>th</sup> to February 13<sup>th</sup> 2020.

**Workshop 1 (Gambian Facilitators)** ran for four days

**Workshop 2 (Grade 1)** ran for seven days. Seventeen Grade 1 teachers, many from rural schools attended this workshop

**Workshop 3 (Grade 2)** also ran for seven days. Twenty-five Grade 2 teachers attended. All of our Gambian facilitators took part in delivery of these courses.

### **Gambian Facilitators**

The objective of inviting eight facilitators to work with GIVE is to provide continuity in the delivery of quality In-Service coaching and training to their peers and colleagues.

- Each facilitator demonstrated a class lesson in Maths, English or Phonics to either the Grade 1 teachers or Grade 2 teachers.
- Each facilitator played an important role in guiding the planning of lessons by Grade 1 and Grade 2 teachers and then modelled for the group.
- As far as possible, facilitators were encouraged to view the GIVE Workshops as a continuous learning opportunity for the course participants. The need for time-management during each day and for ongoing planning and preparation for every session was highlighted.
- Facilitators were given an additional set of notes on Reflective Teaching.

### 4.3 GIVE Lower Basic Course and Workshop Content

Covering the Gambian syllabus as laid down in the Ministry of Education (MoBSE) Teachers' and Pupils' Text books, the Lower Basic Workshops for Grade 1 and Grade 2 teachers concentrated on specific lesson units in Maths, Integrated Studies and English with an emphasis on teaching reading and writing through a systematic training in Phonics.

Time was dedicated to **lesson planning**, with clear objectives and teaching strategies to support the progress of the child in new learning and learning through hands-on activities.



Picture shows a lesson planning session led by our Gambian colleague

#### **4.4 Classroom Management**

This was an important element of this years' courses. The teaching and learning environment were examined in relation to:

- the classroom itself, as an orderly, tidy and organised space,
- the teachers' attitude and professionalism in providing a safe and secure atmosphere for learning
- the child as learner and as central to every aspect of the teaching and learning experience.

Teachers were given the opportunity to discuss common classroom situations with their peers.

- Lesson planning and the importance of revision and active learning were emphasised.
- An attitude of kindness and respect for all students, as a strategy in dealing with different classroom scenarios, was discussed and analysed.
- Corporal punishment is against the law in The Gambia as it is in Ireland, it is essential for teachers work with pupils in a fair and supportive manner.

#### **Maths**

**Grade 1** Workshop sessions focussed on teaching the number bonds 1 to 10 and 11 to 20. Practical class based counting activities and games were included. Simple, easily available materials (cardboard, bottle-tops, bundles of sticks, 10 frames and number strips) were used and teachers took the opportunity to make resources for their own classes.

**Grade 2** teachers also experienced hands-on Maths activities. The focus at Grade 2 level was on subtraction, the specific terms used in subtraction (minus, take-away, subtract, less than) were emphasised. Practical methods of using bundles of 10 in subtraction were examined. Teachers discussed and planned Maths lessons together.





***'Hands-on' with Ten Frames***



***Subtraction and 100 square***

Every teacher participating in GIVE workshops made a 100 square chart, a number line for classroom display and a set of number cards which they can use in a variety of ways within their classrooms.

### **English and Early Literacy**

Lessons for Grade 1 were based on Unit 14, *In my Town* and Unit 21, *Days of the Week*. Oral language development was emphasised. Teachers practised 'pair-work' using question and answer techniques in preparation for using this method with children in their classes.

Lessons for Grade 2 allowed for language development in descriptions, using adjectives and opposites e.g. happy, sad, wet, dry, old, new etc. Opportunities for reading and writing were examined, and teachers were encouraged to extend the children's ability to write independently.

The importance of **phonics** as reading and spelling strategy was explained. Demonstration lessons were given on short and long vowel sounds, and alternative spellings were practised.

**Local Languages:** Newly developed classroom texts under the title '*The Gambia Reads*' are now available (in limited supply) in several local languages from Grade 1 to Grade 3. Our Gambian colleagues demonstrated **phonic and reading lessons** based on these texts, using local languages Seereer, Mandinka and Olaf. This allowed teachers to see that the reading strategies demonstrated in English are effective in the acquisition of early literacy in every language.

### **Integrated Studies**

Grade 1 and Grade 2 lessons on plants, farming, crops and livestock were based on classroom texts at each class lesson. Teachers observed how the use of materials such as local plants, the use of pictures as drawn by teacher and images from newspapers, magazines or library/other textbooks will enhance a lesson.

### **Music and Song**

Each morning began with a lively singing session. This provided a great opportunity for all of the participants to learn new songs for the classroom and to enjoy singing together. Singing brought out the fun in everyone under the expert guidance of our Music teacher who took this task on along with taking responsibility for Classroom Management and Integrated Studies.

*Míle buíochas, many thanks, abarraka and jera jef* to the GIVE Lower Basic Team and Gambian facilitators for this wonderful work!!

Summary of participants' evaluations of the course. **See Appendix Three**



GIVE Lower Basic Team with Gambian teaching colleagues and Mr. Gibba on final day of workshops.

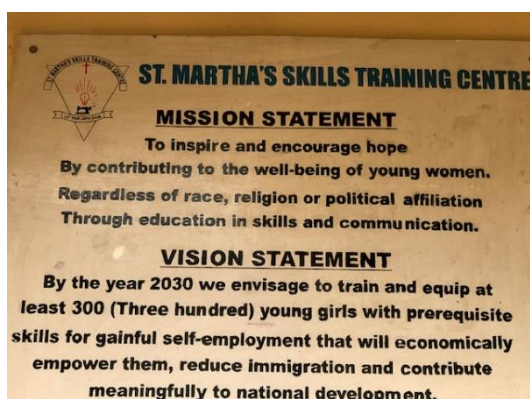
Unavoidably absent from photograph is Mary Cunningham (GIVE Team member)

## 5: SKILLS CENTRES

**GIVE team:** Liam Burke, Eilís Fagan Shiels, Jean Geraghty, Michael Griffin, Carmel Harrison, Mary Hayes, Sheila O’Driscoll and Imelda Traynor

This is the tenth year in which GIVE volunteers have worked in the Skills Centres, St. Peter’s Lamin, St. Martha’s Fajikunda and Presentation, Banjul. All three centres cater for the skill needs of females aged from 16 to 24 years whose educational standards cross a wide spectrum and whose literacy needs (English language) vary greatly. Training is provided in hairdressing, sewing, craft work, cooking, home management skills, computer skills and business studies. The GIVE programme in the three centres concentrates on English Language literacy, acquiring competence and confidence in communicating through English, on Life Skills and on Computer skills.

### 5:1 St. Martha’s Skill Centre:



A newly qualified teacher of English and Maths and a hotel chef have been recruited to the staff of this centre this year and the resultant improvement in purpose and outcome is clear. As well as setting out their own programme both Imelda and Eilís worked closely with the teacher of English Mr. Gomez who was keen to observe the operation of standardised testing of the students and the teaching of some lessons from “The Gambian Basic and Secondary Education Course book, lessons on grammar, comprehension work in English and a lesson on Maths. The emphasis was on

functional adult literacy using material that was age and interest appropriate as well as being culturally and ability appropriate. All felt that this was a very worthwhile sharing of experience and the students enjoyed the programme.

**Volunteer comment:** “Seventeen days face to face work is not a very long time but I hope that their oral English improved and we shared an enjoyable learning experience. It was much easier to see learning take place with the more advanced 2<sup>nd</sup> year students”.

## 5.2 Presentation Skills Centre, Banjul

Major building work was going on at this centre before our arrival and during our stay in The Gambia. Two teachers were placed in this centre, Carmel Harrison for the 4 weeks and Michael Griffin and Liam Burke “job shared” the second placement. It appeared that very little preparation had taken place for the arrival of the GIVE volunteers and the immediate task on day one was to clarify whose literacy needs would be addressed over the four weeks. Carmel Harrison and Liam Burke carried out preliminary testing to establish reading abilities (English) and assigned the students into ability groups and set out a timetable. Very many of the students were very weak in reading skills and lacked a confidence in oral work in English. Some of the students were highly motivated and attended class every day while absenteeism and lack of enthusiasm hindered the progress of some students.

Oral work was a central component of every lesson on topics of interest to the students themselves such as cooking, ingredients, menus, going to the market, life in the Gambia and family celebrations. The Gambian Course Books for Integrated Studies and English (Lower Basic) provide much of the background knowledge and topics of interest to the students. Some limited progress was achieved with some students doing very basic phonic work and word decoding skills. Carmel Harrison taught some basic phrases in French and found that, in some cases, the students were more comfortable using French than using English. All three volunteers feel that the literacy needs of these pupils could be better addressed in a more systematic manner and would dearly wish to work in close liaison with a staff member assigned to monitor the literacy needs of these students.

## 5: 3 St. Peter’s Skill Centre, Lamin.



Ciarán Black has a long association with GIVE since its very early days and has contributed much to the positive developments in St. Peter’s Skill Centre. Three of the GIVE volunteers, Mary Hayes, Jean Geraghty and Liam Burke had previously worked in St. Peter’s and they were joined on this occasion by Sheila O’Driscoll, first time GIVE volunteer. Liam joined the team in St. Peter’s after two weeks in other roles with GIVE.

Ciarán Black, St. Peter’s Skill Centre, Lamin, The Gambia and Cork City, Ireland.

Ciarán emphasised that above all he hoped that the students would be provided with a happy enjoyable experience by the GIVE programme and had selected the mixed-ability groups prior to the arrival of the GIVE volunteers. The team worked on the students’ competence in communicating through English, orally and written, and in developing some life skills, mindfulness and well-being. They concentrated on sentence structure, vocabulary building, questioning, pronouns, tenses, discussion and relied on a variety of topics and themes from newspaper articles, maps, Sudoku, Scrabble, Gambian culture and traditions, greetings, family celebrations. The students in one group wrote short biographies to exchange with students in an Irish school. Students were keen to attend the GIVE classes.



“GIVE” laptops in St. Peter’s SC



Sewing Room, St. Peter’s SC

Mary Hayes presented a programme of computer studies to six groups. The programme with 1<sup>st</sup> year students was at a very elementary level and introduced the students to keyboard techniques and I.T. procedures and built a solid foundation. More advanced I.T. techniques were taught to the 2<sup>nd</sup> year students whose literacy levels were higher and enabled them to work on C.V. preparation, job application letters and writing reports. The students set their own pace depending on their individual capacity and were enthusiastic about their work.

Recommendation: GIVE to consider teaching a basic Maths programme to the students, some of whom have ambitions to set up a sewing business.

## 6: MEETING OF PRINCIPAL TEACHERS

Presenters: Paul F. Gomez, Eibhlín MacNamara, Mary Cunningham, Liam Burke, Michael Griffin

In conjunction with the CES, GIVE co-hosted a two-day meeting of Principal Teachers on 28<sup>th</sup> and 29<sup>th</sup> January in Gambia Pastoral Institute. This proved an ideal venue and 45 Principals attended over two days.

Paul F. Gomez presented on Management Skills and dealt with communication skills, motivation, planning, problem solving, involvement of Senior Management Team, transparency and accountability.

Eibhlín MacNamara and Mary Cunningham (GIVE) in their presentations set out the main elements of the workshop programme which GIVE is facilitating with the teachers from the schools; they both acknowledged the support of the principal teachers for the GIVE programme and thanked them for facilitating the attendance of the teachers from their schools at the workshops. The importance of each teacher using the Teacher’s Manual in preparing their lesson plans (English, Maths, and Integrated Studies) was emphasised; among many other issues they pointed out the value of providing a stimulating print-rich environment for the pupils and emphasised the use of concrete materials as central to all Mathematics teaching.

Michael Griffin presented on Developing a Whole-School Approach to Positive Behaviour and centred on vision and mission, team approach, positive school culture, relationships and clear communication, collaborative learning and class management techniques.

Liam Burke presented on Mentoring which gave rise to a rich engagement with the topic by many principals. He stressed the necessity for agreed ground rules for mentoring if it is to make an impact and the importance of training in mentoring if it is to be successful and beneficial; he clarified that mentoring can operate at a variety of levels in the school – peer mentoring, senior teacher with newly recruited teacher, pupil mentoring.

Reflective Practice was the final module of the seminar. Michael Griffin referred to the benefits of reflective practice – creating confidence in teachers, widening a range of skills, cultivating an ability to solve problems, assessing strengths and weaknesses leading to development as a professional. He finished the presentation with the image of a reflective teacher who is not shy of seeking advice or assistance and asking the question “How can I do it better?”. Doing this is not a sign of being an underwhelming teacher; in fact it is quite the opposite: it shows you are brave and professional.

Thirty seven participants completed an evaluation at the end of each day of the course. A summary of these evaluations is appended to this report. **See Appendix Four**

## 7: THE VOICE OF THE VOLUNTEER.

### **A selection of the feedback from volunteers on the 2020 GIVE project**

Preparation: *“Though as a returning volunteer I had heard some of the speakers before I found them to be informative, helpful and interesting. It is useful to share our ideas as it focuses your mind on the journey ahead”, “Consecutive training days is best”.*

Further ideas for preparation: *“Greater clarity and focus on the direction of our work especially in the Skill Centres – particularly in the area of literacy”, Greater awareness on Contingencies’ arrangements.*

Travel arrangements **to and from** The Gambia: *“Excellent”. “Very well organised”. “I don’t think travelling home on a work day is a good idea. “I’d like a day or two free before work starts and definitely a day or two at the end before coming home”.*

Travel arrangements **within** The Gambia: *“Pa’s Taxi service was excellent”. “The traffic has increased in the past few years and sometimes the driving can be scary”.*

Elements that might add to the success of the project in the future: *“Four weeks is a very short time”, “build in more time to visit schools”, “Continue the development of School Principal meetings and topics” “Provide more opportunities for the involvement of the Gambian facilitators in the course delivery”, “I would like to see recently retired teachers who have worked in the Infant sector in Ireland coming on board (as volunteers)”, “more new recruits”, “classroom project in which a GIVE volunteer and a Gambian teacher would plan and co-deliver on a topic”.*

Accommodation in The Gambia: *“The B.B. gets 10 out of 10 from me and the staff are lovely”, “Extremely satisfactory with the exception of unreliable WiFi coverage”, “expensive – in high season”,*

General comments on your trip to The Gambia: *“I thoroughly enjoyed my trip – the entire group were friendly, encouraging, supportive and great craic”, “Thank you for the opportunity to work with so many talented, interesting and fun-loving people”, “I found it a very rewarding, enjoyable and challenging experience”,*

## 8: Conclusion

The Board of Directors has considered the report commenting favourably on the growing sense of partnership between GIVE volunteers and CES staff, Gambian facilitators, teachers and school Principals. The Board is agreed that GIVE will continue:

- (1) ongoing support for the retention of Gambian facilitators in delivery of ECD workshop programme
- (2) to explore the implementation of the GIVE programme in schools and classrooms
- (3) to develop an Adult Education Strategy to clarify the work of GIVE volunteers in the Skills Centres.

Planning and development of GIVE projects will continue throughout the coming year.

## 9: Appendix One

### Feedback from the facilitators of Early Childhood Development workshops

Philomen Mendy, Marie Bass, Ida Mendy, Ellen Gomez, Francis Mendy, Elizabeth Sylva, Therése Gibba, Josephine Mendy, Kaddy Mendy, Celestine Sambou.

#### (1) What are the challenges which you face?

- (a) *As a trained facilitator you are expected to give of your best and so that the people you are training will be impressed. It was not that easy to be in the midst of teachers who might have seen you as somebody who cannot deliver well. This takes a lot of boldness, confidence and action (on the part of the facilitator).*
- (b) *Sometimes it's not easy to cope when workshops are being organised. (So that I can go out and do my work) I have to leave everything in order. I have nobody to look after my family. Let's say we are asked to go up-country for workshops we are asked to leave our families behind and people like me always find it so hard because all of my children are boys and the question arises who is going to take care of them from the point of view of cooking and looking after them in the house. When we get back everything is just stressful after a long stay and the spirit is not there. Materials are provided but not enough for everybody during the workshops.*
- (c) *The main challenges for me are getting to the venue and the delivery of the workshop.*
- (d) *Preparation – I find it very difficult to be told on the very first day that I was going to present a lesson. The venue – it was too far for me to travel to.  
Materials – they cost a lot of money to get them.  
Delivery – before now I found it not easy but because of the training I am going through now I will improve a lot.*
- (e) *I always remember that I can be called at anytime to go and facilitate so I am always ready and prepared.  
(This) venue is fine – it's easy for me. The only problem is the noise around the area. (Possibly misinterpreted the venue in the question).  
Materials: I sometimes find it difficult to get what I want when going for a cluster workshop. Some teachers (or school) do not have enough materials and after delivering the workshop they ask for these materials from me.*

(f) *The main challenges for me are my level of English language and my self-confidence I have to improve myself in English language.*

*Preparation: As a team we sat and prepared all the teaching aids for all of the areas.*

*The venue is also not a big problem – the place is always ready.*

*The materials are always available as needed for both the facilitators and the participants.*

(g) *My challenges in preparing was how to put sensible words together to make a poem and putting ideas together on how a poem should be taught and made attractive for the children. (may have been referring to the workshop delivered by GIVE in CES). The venue is not inconvenient though the fans were not working and sometimes the place is hot.*

**(2) What are the benefits of being a facilitator:**

(a) *There is a noticeable difference between what was going on before the delivery and after the delivery.*

(b) *It is very good to organise workshops so as to help our teachers to keep up the good work in school and move with awareness. I want them (GIVE) to give more help in the side of the workshops so that many of our thoughts and ideas can be shared among ourselves and also help other teachers to be aware of what is happening in the nursery system and try to work towards it for a better future.*

(c) *We teach in new ways. Sometimes the way your friend delivers a lesson seems easier than the way you deliver – you can copy that new method. As a member of a team you are not married to one topic – you may present Oral language this time and next you move to number, rhymes or management and thereby get to know all of the areas.*

(d) *It makes me change my ways of teaching – I learn a lot of teaching methods in both subjects.*

(e) *Teachers now have experience of how to handle children in different age groups.*

(f) *I have more teaching materials that I have prepared.*

**(3) Any suggestions that you would like to make in order to help the GIVE tutors in future workshops.**

(a) *Continue to guide and support us.*

(b) *I hope and pray that the GIVE people keep up the help so that the Gambian teachers reach their goals in taking care of our young ones and prepare them for their future.*

(c) *In English help on how to read a story to the children.*

(d) *Motivating the facilitators on how best to organise workshops.*

(e) *Help us in ways of teaching a pre-nursery class in all subjects or areas. You may not know when you will be shifted to another class.*

*Once again thanks very much for your kind support and may the good God continue to guide and protect you now and always. Safe journey back home.*

## 10: Appendix Two

### **Feedback from the teachers in Early Childhood Education who have attended the first year of facilitator training.**

Those who attended this training course:

Ellen Mendy, Sarah Baddie, Suisan F. Mendy, Anna Mbenga, Sr. Cecilia Bass, Rose Mendy, Adelaide Demba, Sainabou Mendy, Anice Sambou, Aminata Mendy, Jacqueline Boissy.

*One of the main challenges for me is the difficulty in getting materials because the school is off road.*

*My biggest challenge is the travel distance to the venue. I travel from up-country to come and stay with my sister in the same room about which I feel somehow guilty.*

**What did you find most useful in the course?**

*How to write a lesson plan, good classroom management skills and how to teach. My English has improved and I know more ways to do sorting and matching.*

*Phonics is a new thing to me and I have learned a lot which I can now bring back to my school and teach my fellow teachers.*

*How to teach a poem – the steps I take. The teaching of a poem was explained to us loud and clear – we should have more lessons on that.*

*A lot of talk was done on classroom management.*

*Language, phonics, Maths and Classroom Management really helped me a lot – I learned plenty new things in these areas. I have never undergone any training and this is the opportunity for me to learn new things in all areas.*

*Different ways of teaching – number, sorting before introducing counting; how to teach a poem.*

*The most useful things that I learned in this two - week course is the maths lesson which was well delivered and English whereby actions are used to read a sentence. This will help me because I have a disabled (child) in my class who cannot talk clearly.*

*In classroom management how to handle the child who is new into the system, beginning school.*

*New Mathematics games, storylines.*

*I learned that a facilitator is a person who makes this happen. I believe that I will be able to deliver whatever I learned here in this course. I also learned new things from my friends and they too learn from me.*

*I learned how a good teacher should be (manage) in her class with his / her children; I also learned how to prepare teaching aids for a particular lesson how to teach a poem, how to read a story.*

*When I go back I will help my fellow teachers at the school; I am ready to go back and deliver to my pupils and teachers.*

**What resources did you make during the course that you will use in your classroom?**

*All of them are useful in the classroom;*

*When I go back to my classroom there will be a lot of changes – change the old (vanguard) posters to new ones;*

*Counters, number lines, number games, charts, poems, rhymes, songs, pictures, storytelling, counting backwards, sorting of different things, colour games, flash cards and drawings, letters and pictures.*

*Sound cards and picture cards, the lesson plan, tricky words, the number line, shapes, songs and poems, storytelling.*



*Concrete materials, the lesson plan.*

## 11: Appendix Three

**GIVE/CES Workshops for Grade 1 and Grade 2 Teachers**

**Jan/Feb 2020**

### **Participants Evaluation Form**

Course participants were asked to provide feedback on their experience of the workshops they attended at the CES Hall. The following comments are representative of the comments that were made.

#### **What did you learn about teaching phonics, teaching English and the use of the Pupils' Book and Teachers' Guide?**

*I learned about the long vowel sounds which I think is very important for children especially when spelling and pronouncing words.*

*I learned that all these (reading/writing/oral work) should go side by side, leaving one hanging will create a void in the understanding and learning accomplishment.*

*Oral language helps to improve children's ability to speak English well. Both Teachers' Guide and Pupils' Book are very complete and useful tools for teachers and pupils.*

#### **What did you learn about teaching number, using concrete materials, and the use of the Pupils' book and Teachers' Guide in Maths.**

*...that using concrete materials will make teaching easy and make it easier for children to understand. Using materials in class can help a teacher to involve his children and make them participate and become active.*

*Concrete materials are very useful in teaching because it helps the children to count numbers from 1 – 10, from 10 – 1 and from 20 -30, 30 – 20 using abacus, frame, number cards.*

#### **What did you learn about Classroom Management?**

*As a teacher you should prepare yourself properly for the students and also know how to handle your class. You should keep the students busy by doing something active concerning learning.*

*Preparing a lesson plan and teaching materials are important.*

*For a teacher to manage a classroom well, he or she needs to be active and passionate and be a role model to the pupils.*

#### **What did you learn about Integrated Studies?**

*When teaching integrated studies, teacher should allow students to touch and feel certain things like plants, fruit, vegetables and sand etc.*

*To effectively teach Integrated studies we need to use our local languages a lot because most of the words are new to the children.*

#### **What did you like about the music and singing lessons?**

*It was interesting that we learnt lots of songs. It was educative and it will make the pupils active and happy in class*

*It motivates a lot in class. It makes class lively. It engages everyone and it draws attention.*

### **What advice would you like to give for future workshops?**

*Please don't let what you are doing stop because it is very important teachers learn new methods, and this helps a lot in their planning and delivery.*

*I would suggest that during workshops both teachers and tutors be visiting schools to see tangible evidences. I would like these workshops to be continued more frequently.*

## 12: Appendix Four

### **Principals' Meeting, 28<sup>th</sup> and 29<sup>th</sup> January, 2020.**

Summary of the evaluation of the workshop. Thirty seven participants completed an evaluation at the end of each day of the course.

#### **General:**

#### **How did you hear about the course?**

*Via a letter from CES; From the CES office through its schools co-ordinator followed by telephone call reminder and via WhatsApp message; through our cluster monitor.*

#### **Are you happy with the GPI Hall as a venue for meetings like this?**

*Almost all participants were either happy or very happy with the venue – it is spacious, neat, tidy, ventilated and conducive to meetings like this; it is free from interruptions, less noisy and not distracting. One participant suggested that all GIVE seminars for Principals be held in the GPI hall. Two participants who are happy with the venue referred to the distance which they travelled to attend and the cost of the travel.*

#### **Management Skills: Day One**

#### **What were the most important points you learned from this presentation?**

*Functions of Management: Good management requires good organisational skills, co-ordinating, controlling, directing and monitoring the work of the whole school;*

*Good communication skills, motivating both teachers and pupils; managing human relations requires that the head teacher has an understanding of what motivates people and how individual differences affects the behaviour of people; empowering employees, principals being open to feedback (humbling oneself) and listening to your teachers; patience;*

*Problem solving; Commitment, passion, transparency and accountability; empathy, honesty and integrity;*

*The importance of teamwork and good planning; Mobilising resources, human and material.*

*“Don't be an arm-chair sitter”.*

#### **Did you learn something in this module that will be useful to you in your work?**

*Yes, like working as a team in the school (involving all staff and stakeholders) and not individual work. I learned that I need to be patient with my teachers and pupils; I learned that planning should involve everyone and should be co-ordinated by the head-teacher;  
Yes, problem solving skills and professionalism;  
The importance of a positive approach, positive school culture and positive classroom culture;  
All five functions of Management that I have just learned will be useful to me in my work;  
An understanding of what motivates people and also how individual differences affect behaviour;*

**Did you get sufficient opportunity to participate in the meeting?**

*Yes. We interacted and learned from each other; I got the opportunity to make my contributions; The information was clear and the questions and contributions were very good;  
I listened and participated positively; I did not contribute per se but I listened keenly;  
There were no distractions and I listened and learned well;*

**If we were to run a Management Skills course again, what changes (if any) would you suggest we make?**

*I would prefer it to be given at the beginning of the academic year in order to give the newly promoted administrators new skills on the day to day running of the school;  
I don't think that I would make changes because I was very satisfied with the entire programme;  
Award certificates to all participants. Change the two days to four days or a week;  
Ask heads to bring in some of the main problems they are facing in managing their schools;  
More time to be given to participants to read the screen; handouts to be given for every presentation to enable better understanding;  
Involve deputy head teachers; include Senior teachers;  
More group work and practical exercises; "Time is needed for practical real-life demonstrations of management skills; Send the topics for discussion in advance to principals before the training;*

**GIVE Day One and Day 2**

**Has one or more of your teachers attended the GIVE course (Grade One or Grade Two) in the past 4 years?**

Twenty one (21) replied **Yes** and nine (9) replied **No**. A few were unsure as they are new to their school; some are Principals of Upper Basic schools and teachers in those schools have not had the opportunity of attending a course for that level.

**Is there an opportunity for a teacher who has attended the course to share her learning with other teachers in your school? How might this sharing of learning take place?**

Most principals who answered this question suggest that this teacher learning can be shared by means of school - based workshops and step-down training. One suggested the option of inviting a lecture to the staff and another thought that Senior Management Teacher meetings might be a means of sharing this learning.

**What changes or additions would you suggest for the GIVE course?**

*Curriculum management and Time management to be included as topics in the course.*

*Extend the GIVE course to teachers in Grades 3 to 6 because it is very effective. "I love the way they prepare their teaching aids before any lesson delivery".*

P.S. There seems to be confusion as to which GIVE course was being referred to in the question. Some Principals interpreted it as referring to the Principals' two - day course.

### **POSITIVE BEHAVIOUR (Day One)**

**What did you learn from this part of the course that you would like to implement in your school?**

*Team approach to behaviour management to include principal and staff, students and their parents;  
Positive school culture;*

*Recognising good work from the teachers and encourage them for a job well done; More  
interaction between pupils and teachers; Rewarding, praising and keeping students busy; I will  
encourage my teachers to using reward when necessary as motivation;*

*Ability grouping in classrooms, attending to every child and giving work according to their abilities;  
Calling pupils by their names;*

**What changes, if any, would you suggest we make to this part of the meeting (Positive Behaviour) – changes in the presentation? Format? Opportunity for principals to discuss and exchange ideas? more emphasis or less emphasis on some issues? (Additional issues?)**

*More time should be given to questions and suggestions so that we learn good practices from each other; The school heads should have been encouraged to share their own experience and on how to address positive behavioural change; to share problems in their schools and discuss solutions;*

**Overall, how satisfied were you with this section (Positive Behaviour) of the meeting?**

Very Satisfied 25

Satisfied 11

Dis-satisfied 0

Very dis-satisfied 0

*There should have been a loud-speaker because not everybody has a loud voice and some teachers could not get the facilitators clearly.*

### **DAY TWO**

#### **MENTORING SKILLS**

**Do you feel, as a result of this presentation, that you would try to implement mentoring, at some level, in your school? (Peer mentoring – at principal level, at senior teacher level, teacher with teacher)**

*Yes, teacher with teacher mentoring; Yes senior teacher level;*

*Yes, but more training is needed; Not all heads are trained in mentoring;*

*Yes, it is a necessity in schools; while it exists there are no written mentoring policies;*

**Was sufficient time (opportunity) given to you to discuss and exchange ideas with colleagues during the meeting?**

*Yes, the meeting was well opened and participants were given the opportunity to interact and exchange ideas;*

*There were opportunities but I did not contribute;*

*There is need for group work in order to practice on all of the presentations;*

**Is there any aspect of mentoring that you would like to learn more about? Such as?**

*Organising mentor training to all senior teachers in the schools by the office;  
Yes, counselling; Student mentoring; Teacher with teacher mentoring;  
Record keeping for all staff in the school;  
The ones covered were so good that I was highly moved;  
Conflict resolution; coverage of the curriculum.*

**REFLECTIVE PRACTICE DAY 2**

**How relevant do you think this theme is**

- (a) To you as a principal**
- (b) To a Mentor teacher**
- (c) To teachers in your school.**

*Reflection will help me to manage mentoring well, to develop my knowledge and will help teachers to improve on their teaching;*

*Reflective practice for the principal gives a sense of direction on what to do, gives the mentor more experience and improves the teacher's performance;*

*The Principal should be open to ideas from the whole staff; it will help the principal to find out the strengths and weaknesses in his leadership;*

*This theme is very relevant to the Principal, the Mentor teacher and to teachers in the school;*

*Reflective practice*

- *means being open to criticism and evaluation improves leadership;*
- *brings about teamwork, teachers supporting each other to a common goal;*
- *allows the teacher to improve their practice and develop a wider range of skills;*
- *Better career development*
- *helps teachers to deliver more successfully in their class and to build closer relationships among themselves.*

**Please feel free to comment on the overall meeting (2 days) and to offer any suggestions for future meetings of Principal Teachers.**

*CES should recommend this course to all head-teachers. I would like to have this training every year, it should be held at the beginning of the academic year; The ability of facilitators to explain was very good and enough time was given to heads / principals to express themselves.*

*It's a wonderful day; presentation was just excellent; It was a very interactive day;*

*The duration was ok and the content for discussion was smart;*

*Although I arrived late I am impressed with the whole day activities;*

*It was interesting, educative and helpful; whether it will be put into practice is the question; Deputy Principals should be given the opportunity to attend;*