

**CHILD AND ENVIRONMENTAL  
DEVELOPMENT ASSOCIATION THE  
GAMBIA**



**2019 PROGRESS REPORT**

# Acknowledgements

Before starting this report I will first like to acknowledge our partners who have worked with us in order to change lives and add value to the work we do:

- INTERNATIONAL SOCIAL SERVICE- WEST AFRICA
- ANPAS – ASSOCIAZIONE NAZIONALE PUBBLICHE ASSISTENZE
- COOPI
- CROSSROAD SHIPMENT
- OFFICE OF THE HIGH COMMISSIONER FOR HUMAN RIGHTS
- UNICEF-THE GAMBIA
- FABRRADER FUR AFRIKA V.

## **TECHNICAL PARTNERS**

- **Department for Social Welfare**
- **Ministry of Basic and Secondary Education**
- **Child Welfare Unit- Gambia Immigration Department**
- **Child welfare Unit- Gambia Police**
- **National Youth and Sport**
- **UNICEF**

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## **ACRONYMS**

|                |  |
|----------------|--|
| <b>ANPAS</b>   | Associazione Nazionale Pubbliche Assistenze                      |
| <b>CEDAG</b>   | Child and Environmental Development Association- The Gambia      |
| <b>CCPCs</b>   | Community Child Protection Committees                            |
| <b>CSC</b>     | Consortium for Street Children                                   |
| <b>CWCY</b>    | Coordination of Working Children and Youths                      |
| <b>CSOs</b>    | Civil Society Organizations                                      |
| <b>CPA</b>     | Child Protection Alliance  |
| <b>ICSCATS</b> | International Centre for Street Children and trafficking Studies |
| <b>DSW</b>     | Department of Social Welfare                                     |
| <b>IEC</b>     | Information, Education and Communication                         |
| <b>ISS-WA</b>  | International Social Service- West Africa                        |
| <b>NGO</b>     | Non-Governmental Organization                                    |
| <b>GID</b>     | Gambia Immigration Department                                    |
| <b>GPF</b>     | Gambia Police Force  |
| <b>PAO</b>     | Programme for West Africa  |
| <b>TANGO</b>   | The Association of Non-Governmental Organizations                |
| <b>WAN</b>     | West Africa Network for the protection of children               |

**Statement by the Board Chairman—OMAR SEY**

CEDAG over the last 19 years has established itself as an organization committed towards welfare and empowerment of vulnerable children and their communities. The organization has worked with multiple stakeholders: governmental bodies, media, private sector, international and national NGOs and multilateral organizations to create a platform and an understanding towards this marginalized and voiceless section of the society.

Taking impetus from its previous work CEDAG, this year articulated and highlighted issues of vulnerable and less advantaged children at regional level as well. We hosted the Child Protection Specialist from 15 countries attended by all the Directors of children protection of the 15 countries of ECOWAS and lead NGOs from all ECOWAS member states. CEDAG was able to present its experiences of working with local policing systems vis-à-vis children on the move. The presentation also included how it works on sensitization and working with local governments and other stakeholders which led to greater impact. CEDAG also understands that vulnerable children sometimes unwittingly become part of corporate supply chains. To ensure opportunities of education, health, nutrition, play and survival it was thus necessary to work with the UN system to ensure their technical and financial support.

All these activities made it possible for CEDAG to highlight a few issues at the national level, issues of children on the move and young migrants resulting in capacity building of child protection actors. CEDAG is one of the first organizations to accept and implement the ECOWAS standard of children on the move and young migrants and today CEDAG is the lead organization on activities relating to children on the move and young migrants in The Gambia.

We have reviewed our organizational policies which have been adopted by the Executive board of the organization and finally I am happy to say that help is coming from different government agencies and organizations in support of our work and mission.

Thank you all for being there for children.

**Statement by the National Coordinator**  
**Morris Ikechukwu O Anyim**

CEDAG enters into 2019 with a remarkable confidence. With sharpened clarity on approach and improved knowledge and talent base, the organization is poised to leap ahead to cover other untouched marginalized and forgotten communities.

As the National Coordinator of CEDAG I feel proud to present its Annual Report for 2019 which provides you a glimpse of what we did and achieved this year through our synergized effort. This year too, CEDAG is reaching the most marginalized sector of our society, that is vulnerable children with focus on street children and children on the move which has been our primary goal. In the process, we successfully touched 430 young lives through 4 projects spread across different regions in the Gambia.

During the year 2019, CEDAG was nominated as a member of the Steering Committee of PAPEV project under the Office of United Nation Commission for Human Rights (UNCHR) and selected as a technical member of the same project. COOPI and CEDAG signed an MOU for the implementation of an international project which has given us a better change and exposed us to higher levels among child protection actors in The Gambia. CEDAG joined CSC to strengthen our effort on issue relation to street children in The Gambia. UNICEF supported us through the Department of Social welfare to tackle the issues of children on the move and young migrants. I hope that our work with vulnerable children and their communities will continue to attract corporate organizations in the same manner.

CEDAG has extended its presence in two Regions (North and Central Regions) by employing two regional Coordinators who assist us with our regional programs. This has strengthened the relationship with us and the communities that we serve hence they see our presence and working with them every day.

Let me end this statement by acknowledging that the strength of CEDAG is based on our own dedicated staff and volunteers who sacrifice their time on emergency issues to save lives. We are looking forward to more years to come where we will have the opportunity to work with you and save more lives especially the children.

## **Overview of the year 2019**

### **CHILDREN ON THE MOVE**

The issues of children on the move have reached an alarming stage and never has the need to protect them felt so urgent. But because of social-economic problems, violence at home and separations of their parents, movement becomes the best option that may enable them to fulfill their dreams and life expectations. It is obvious that they face a lot of exploitation on their way looking for means of survival. The dangers inherent in their journeys, the threat of separation from loved ones and of trafficking, means that these children need our support to access the services and help they need to survive, recover and rebuild their lives.

CEDAG with the help of its partners provided **Psychosocial support** in order to assist children in making informed decisions and coping with childhood challenges. It improves the quality of their lives, and prevents them from embarking on a journey that has no destination. Therefore working toward adherence in providing psychosocial counseling to CoM is our principal objective but we know that in order to achieve it, we cannot focus on reintegration alone. Rather, emotional containment, social inclusion and the development of life projects are pillars in improving the holistic life development and welfare of these children.



We've been able to lift up this central truth and put it to work with help from supports and partners like you. In 2019, CEDAG was the driving force behind the identification and reintegration of children on the move and received from its partners Gambian Children who were identified in other countries and returned to the Gambia. Thanks to your generous support, we have now expanded our programs to two more regions, Upper River and Central River Regions respectively. With your sustained partnership, I look forward to continuing to ensure that CEDAG delivers what is expected of it, and ensuring 2020 is another year for children and their families — because we know that this can help ensure that we overcome poverty for everyone.





Our objective is to provide a calming emotional support, reassurance and information to enable Children on the move to have sufficient emotional resources/capacity to steer the process of their own development and self-esteem

Based on the facts above, UNICEF Gambia through the funding from the UK Government's Department For International Development (DFID) is supporting the Government of the Gambia through Department of Social Welfare and its local partner CEDAG to address issues affecting children on the move in three regions of the Gambia namely;- North Bank Region, Central River Region and greater Banjul Area. 250 children and young people benefited from this activity.



### SUCCESS STORY FOR BATITI SAIDY

*"My name is Batiti Saidy from Misera village, Central River Region. I am 13yrs now, but when I was 12 I was sent by my parents to study the Quran in Senegal. While I was there in Senegal we used to go and beg in the morning till late evening and if I didn't bring money back to my teacher he would beat me very well. I decided to run away to the streets of Senegal where I was caught by the Police and taken to a place for children.*

*I was sent back to the Gambia by some people who were very good to me and when I arrived in the Gambia I was taken to another place for children and later taken back to my village.*

*Today I am back to school in my village. Now I am in grade 6.*



*My name is Demba Gaye. I am 13 years old and I live in **Gelsanjil** North Bank Region of the Gambia. I was taken to Darra in Senegal for Quranic education but I decided not to continue there because of the type of treatment I was receiving from my teacher. I ran away from the Dara and ended up living in the street with other children. One day I saw a person who told me that he works for children and he offered me assistance and asked me if I want to go back to my parents in the Gambia and I said yes and he helped me to come back to the Gambia. But I passed through the house of children in the Gambia. After a few days I was taken to my parents who were happy to receive me.*

*I am back to school and now I am in grade 7 at a school in my village. I am happy to be here. I was told that my going back to school is assisted by UNICEF Gambia.*

## COMMUNITY SUPPORT PROGRAMS

We believe in paving the way through good practices, progressive solutions and mindful actions that make a positive impact. We have an unwavering commitment to global sustainability — with a holistic view of land, climate change and water. And as part of our dedication to global nutrition, we are focused on zero hunger, helping people and communities in far corners across the world.





## **SPONSORSHIP PROGRAM**

### **Our Major achievements in the year 2019 Academic year**

- 60 chairs and 60 tables were donated for the extension of classrooms in Daru Foday
- 150 children are still enrolled in the school
- 29 out of the children enrolled in different schools have sat for their grade 9 examination
- 30 children received bicycles
- 5 volunteers within the North Bank region join CEDAG to assist with the monitoring of the progress of the children.
- A representative from Regional Educational office in Kerewan also join our monitoring team

| <b>Grade in school</b> | <b>No. Children</b> | <b>Boys</b> | <b>Girls</b> |
|------------------------|---------------------|-------------|--------------|
| 4                      | 7                   | 3           | 4            |
| 5                      | 9                   | 4           | 5            |
| 6                      | 23                  | 13          | 10           |
| 7                      | 31                  | 14          | 17           |
| 8                      | 20                  | 8           | 12           |
| 9                      | 29                  | 14          | 15           |
| 10                     | 29                  | 13          | 16           |
| 11                     | 2                   | 2           | 0            |
| <b>TOTAL</b>           | <b>150</b>          | <b>71</b>   | <b>79</b>    |

CEDAG believes together we can achieve our goals towards the education of less privileged children. We have started this journey with you since 11 years ago and have changed the lives of children through supporting them with basic needs for their education.

When we started, our primary focus was to provide basic education to the underprivileged children in the Gambia but today we have measured our success and see that we have excelled more than what we expected. The achievements have not been an easy task –it required a huge amount of efforts, commitment and patience to keep up the promises. We are sure that with our collective strength we’ll be able to fulfil our objective in the days to come. But even though with all this success, there is no time for a pat on the back as many children are still waiting and hoping that one day they will go to school.



*Ida Joof from Munyagen community, now in grade ten (10) student in Kerewan Senior Secondary School*

Despite the complex issues that make it so difficult for families to break the cycle of poverty, we still believe that it can be done. Over the years, we have heard from different communities who felt the support of CEDAG to their children when they were in need. Many of them now help children in their own communities.

We hope you will continue your commitment to the work of our organization, because the lives of children in the Gambia can be transformed when people like you show them love and care which you have been doing for the past years now. We highly appreciate and acknowledge the positive contribution that you have made in the academic year of 2017/2018.



Crossroad shipment donated to CEDAG school furniture which included chairs and tables and books for beginners. The school at Daru Foday which started as a nursery school has now been upgraded to a lower basic school and since it has been upgraded, over 50 children were without chairs and tables to sit on. But with the support received from Crossroad shipment under our request to support the sponsorship program they received 60 chairs and 60 tables.



With the help of an organization Fabrrader Fur Afrika V based in Germany, more 30 bicycles were given to 30 children to support them with the transportation to and from school. This eases their walking for more than 2 to 3 km before they could reach their schools because in most cases when they are not able to walk a long distance they miss their classes leading to poor performance in securing better education which determines their tomorrow.

During the distribution, assistance was extended to other children different from the direct beneficiaries of the sponsorship program. This is to encourage them to pursue education and encourage other parents to send their children to school

The support items given to the beneficiaries were:

- School uniforms and clothes
- Shoes and bags
- Reading, writing and learning materials



## SUCCESS STORIES



*My name is Aja Horoja Cham  
“When I was very small my mother came back one evening and told me that I will soon start school which is in our community. I ask my mother who will buy my uniforms and other things I need for the school. My mother touched my head and told me that God is great. I asked her what that meant, she replied and told me that some people have promised to take care of those expenses. As a young girl I was very happy. I start immediately to tell everyone around me that I will start school soon. Just a little*

*time my mother took me to school for enrollment and I was given a new bag, shoe, uniforms and books. I was very happy that the following day I will be going to school. In the morning I was the first to wake up and request my mother to bath me which she did and put on my new uniform. I was so excited and I called other of my friends who attend the same school and said let us go. Today I am in grade 10 hoping to finish my grade 12 soon. I am really happy that I am able to go to school. Today I can read and write English. Thanks to the people who have help me and my parents”*



*“My name is Filli Njie. I am happy to be enrolled in the school. I enjoy seeing and playing with my friends in the school. We study together too. My mother is happy seeing me going to school. My father does not have much money to send the children to school but I am lucky that I have support from CEDAG which I am told that some people in Toubabuo country is helping me but I don't see them. But my mother always says Allah will bless them. I hope that I will finish my school soon and get a job to help*

*my parents so that my other brothers and sisters will be able to go to school.*

## **Challenges and lessons learned**

During the period under review, the achievements have been faced with challenges that CEDAG has strived hard to overcome, with the support of its partners and other stakeholders. Some of these challenges are chronic in nature, but we developed, adjusted, and refined relevant policies and strategies, based on the lessons learned. Most importantly ensuring community participation and engagement, government responsibility, and multi-sectoral action.

Our activities under different projects were participatory, with involvement of a wide range of stakeholders, including local leaders, other civil society organizations and grassroots groups, from the planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation phases in order to ensure and obtain commitment to action.