

## MBG News – November 2020



**Dear friends,**

As these unprecedented and unpredictable times continue and our focus at MBG has very much been on 2020. However we need to take a moment to hold our AGM, look back over 2019, but also what we have been doing in 2020.

The AGM agenda and 2019 report are attached and you can also find details on our [website \[mbg.org\]](http://mbg.org).

To comply with Covid-19 restrictions, and for the safety of everyone, **the meeting will be online via Zoom, starting at 6:30 on Tuesday 8<sup>th</sup> December.**

Our focus this year has very much been on looking forward and helping the charities we support to still be sustainable and viable through Covid-19. We must hold an AGM to comply with legal requirements so this year's will be quite short and informal and we will look to return to a face to face evening after Easter next year as normal. It has been some time since we have all met and we look forward it!

The 2019 annual report is digital only, though we will add a 2020 preface to it in the new year and publish and post it as a joint report. A printed report means we can reach all our members but also give them out to our volunteers and partners in The Gambia.

If you are an MBG member please do send in your votes for the re-election of the MBG trustees and apologies to [info@mbg.org](mailto:info@mbg.org) if you cannot join us virtually on the night.

### **2020 update**

MBG took the decision earlier this year to distribute more funds than our usual strategy allows. We have been in contact with all our partner charities and so far they remain optimistic and active in planning activities in 2021.

We are particularly pleased to have supported Disability Africa to a total of £30,000 of support at the start of the year in a three way split between MBG, St. James's Place Charitable Foundation and The Think Charitable Foundation. These funds have given a significant boost of unrestricted funding to this ground breaking charity. The disabled children in Gunjur they support are doubly hit by covid restrictions, closing off their social interactions and being especially vulnerable to the disease.

At the moment we are also talking with WasteAid about helping to secure the long term future of the plastic recycling centre. This too has been significantly hit by the restrictions on movement but also the downturn in the Gambian

economy. Employability, which BEREEL and TARUD are both working to improve, remains a critical issue in Gunjur and The Gambia. However the microfinance loans and employability training looks to be restarting again in the first half of 2021.

Covid cases in The Gambia remain much lower than in the UK, however testing is slow and there is a high mortality rate of those with the disease. To stay up to date with developments and news in Gunjur do visit [Gunjur Online \[gunjuronline.com\]](http://Gunjur Online [gunjuronline.com]).

Finally, as I write this I am reflecting that it is a year since I was last in Gunjur and I should have been there with an adult group this week. In talking with Lamin Bojang (on the cover of the annual report) I was reminded that MBG, Venture Force and St. James's Place agreed to fund the project and all of the Gunjur workers, cooks, chaperones and drivers that make the trip and community projects possible so they will not miss out on their planned wages, as well as the accommodation at the lodges – NemaKunta and Footsteps Eco Lodge. Lamin said that while we are not here in person we continue to work together community led projects in Gunjur as one joined community of people.

**Please do join us at the AGM. Until then, stay safe and our best wishes to you all**

As always, you can reach us at [info@mbg.org](mailto:info@mbg.org).

*MBG Trustees*

2019 MBG Annual Report: [\[mbg.org\]](http://mbg.org)



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If you'd like us to stop emailing you, or you'd like to get in touch, please contact: [info@mbg.org](mailto:info@mbg.org)

